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TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

TO THE

CATECHISM

A PRACTICAL EXPLANATION OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE FOR SCHOOL AND PULPIT

WITH SPECIAL REGARD AND MINUTE DIRECTIONS FOR THE

CATECHIZING OF CHILDREN

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By the REV. A. URBAN

Vol. III.—THE MEANS OF GRACE

With numerous Questions and Answers, and an Appendix containing Examples and Illustrations

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JOSEPH F. WAGNER

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AN EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM.

Third Part.

The Means of Grace.

WITH SPECIAL REGARD AND MINUTE DIRECTIONS FOR THE CATECHIZING OF CHILDREN.

I.—The Means of Grace. Actual Grace.

Dear Children: Having concluded our explanation on the commandments which give us guidance as to the good we should do, and the evil we should avoid in order to attain to our supreme end, everlasting salvation, we have also learned that this destiny can not be attained by man through his own natural strength. There must, therefore, be a supernatural help which enables frail man to attain his supreme end, and that is divine grace. I shall make a comparison for you: Your father or mother sets you a task which you begin with a good will to execute, alone and without assistance. But very soon you and your parents perceive that you are not able to accomplish the work, because your strength is not equal to it. Then your parents come to your assistance and the task is made easier. Just as parents help their children, so does the good Lord by His grace help man to perform the good.

God's assistance comes to man through the Means of Grace, which we will now consider. Can we, of our own natural strength, keep the commandments and be saved? No; we can not. Man has received two kinds of strength from God—strength of the body and strength of the soul or mind. The powers of the soul are understanding, reason, free will, the power of imagination, memory, etc. With these powers alone, however, man can not attain his supreme end; he needs divine assistance, that is, divine grace. Holy Writ furnishes us with a proof of this in the words of Christ: "Without me you can do nothing" (John xv. 5). What do we understand by divine grace? By divine grace we understand here a supernatural

help or gift received from God for the purpose to work out our salvation.

Let us first understand the idea of grace. This word denotes the kindly feeling of a superior toward his inferior, and also the operations of this gracious feeling, namely, benefits resulting to the inferior out of this feeling.

This grace of God is an internal help or gift. Internal expresses something within us—in this case within our soul. The grace of God is, furthermore, a supernatural help or gift. The word supernatural is used to show that it is beyond the powers of created nature, coming from the Creator Himself.

God grants us His grace through the merits of Jesus Christ. We know from the instructions on faith that our first parents, by their fall, lost God's love and grace, and that the wrath of God upon our first parents is inherited by all their descendants. Some one, therefore, had to redeem mankind and obtain for them again God's grace. Because a finite being could not appease the offended infinite majesty of God, therefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God Himself, reconciled mankind with God again, and on account of His merits God gives His grace to man.

God grants us His grace for our eternal salvation. Our life in this world should only be a time of preparation and probation. Our real vocation is a higher one; we are called to take part, with God, in celestial bliss, and in order that we may attain this beautiful and exalted aim, God kindly grants us His grace, His assistance.

How many kinds of this supernatural help, or of grace, properly so called, are there?

There are two kinds: 1. Actual grace, or the grace of assistance, called also transient grace; and, 2. The grace of sanctification or justification, called also sanctifying or habitual grace. We shall first explain the idea of assistance. He who gives help in time of danger or need, gives assistance. We men are, from every point of view, weak, especially in the power to work out our salvation. Hence Almighty God comes to our assistance with His help. That is transient which lasts only for a time. That which is transient is opposed to that which lasts and endures. Actual grace is transient, that is to say, it lasts only for a time, while there is occasion for it, while sanctifying grace is permanent and remains in the soul, provided man commits no mortal sin.

I. On Actual Grace.

In what does actual grace, or the grace of assistance consist?

Actual grace consists in this: That God enlightens our understanding and inclines our will to avoid evil, and both to will and to do that what is good.

1. Actual grace enlightens our understanding. Understanding is the power of the soul to know and to understand. That which is dark and sombre can be enlightened. Our understanding or intellect through the sin of our first parents became darkened and clouded, and when we wish to know that which is profitable and necessary for our salvation, our understanding must be enlightened by the assistance of divine grace. Actual grace, therefore, is an internal light for our understanding whereby we perceive what is profitable and necessary for our eternal salvation.

2. Actual grace, or the grace of assistance, operates further upon our will. The will is the power of the soul to desire and to choose between sacred things. Man may choose two kinds of things: the good, which is rewarded with heaven, and the evil, which is punished with hell. Since our will is corrupted through original sin, it is far more inclined to evil than to good. Man's will is also enfeebled through original sin; he lacks the strength successfully to resist temptation. By the grace of assistance our will is moved and strengthened to avoid evil, and to wish and to do good.

We distinguish, therefore, 1. An enlightening, and, 2. An inciting or strengthening grace.

Is the assistance of grace necessary to us?

Yes; it is so necessary to us that without this grace we can neither begin, continue, nor accomplish the least thing toward our salvation.

The necessity of actual grace is clearly expressed in Holy Writ. It says: "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish" (Phil. ii. 13). St. Paul the apostle exclaims: "I have labored more abundantly than all they; yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (I. Cor. xv. 10). The grace of God is necessary for the beginning of all good; it must precede all the good that we think of, speak, or do; it incites man thereto. It must, furthermore, accompany all good works, must help man perpetually thereunto, and is necessary for perseverance in good.

Does God give His grace to all men?

Yes; God gives to all men sufficient grace to enable them to keep the commandments and to work out their salvation. Holy Scripture says: "God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of truth" (I. Tim. ii. 4).

Some centuries ago there were heretics who advanced the false teaching that God had destined a certain part of mankind for eternal happiness, and the other part (without fault of theirs) to eternal perdition. This would mean that God would give His grace only to those whom He had intended to be saved. Observe, children, this heretical teaching is contrary to our faith, which says: God has called all men to salvation, because He is a loving Father to all men. He imparts to *all* men sufficient grace to be saved. If God has destined certain men for heaven, without their merit, and certain others to hell, without their fault, then God would be unjust in the highest degree, and such injustice would be contrary to the divine perfection. That all men are intended for eternal happiness is proved by Christ's parable of the wedding feast. The Lord said: "Go out and invite all those whom you meet to my marriage feast" (Luke xiv). God gives His grace to all men; He gives (a) To the just the grace of perseverance, and (b) To sinners first grace sufficient to lead to conversion, and upon their conversion the grace of perseverance. That God grants grace for conversion to the sinner appears from the Scriptures: "God desires not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezech. xxxiii. 11). That even the greatest sinner may obtain the grace of conversion is seen in the example of the thief upon the cross.

But here is another question: Does God grant His grace to all men in the same measure, that is to say, does God grant to one man as much grace as to another?

No; God does not grant grace in the same measure to all men. This is taught in the parable of the talents. One servant received five, the other two talents, and another only one. None, however, went without. Why and for what reason one man should receive more or less divine grace than another is known to God's wisdom alone.

What must we do, on our part, in order that the grace of God may tend to our salvation?

We must not resist it, but faithfully cooperate with it. Holy Scripture says: "We do exhort you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain" (II. Cor. vi. 1).

To resist means to oppose or fight against something. Suppose a man falls in the water and nearly drowns. We hold a hand out to him or throw him a rope. He, however, refuses all means of assistance. You see, dear children, just as such man acts in regard to saving of his temporal life, so may persons act in regard to the saving of their eternal souls; they stubbornly reject all attempts of God to save them. Instead of resisting, men ought to cooperate with God's grace; they should listen to God's inspirations, grasp the helping hand of God, and hold it fast.

God wishes so much to be our Helper, He desires so ardently to save us, and yet ungrateful man often refuses His assistance, and rejects contemptuously His Means of Grace. But how can weak and impotent man resist the Almighty God? Can man resist the grace of God? Most certainly; God's grace does not force the human will; it leaves it free. It is necessary that good be done entirely from free will, for if man were compelled by God to do good he would have no merit; the good would not be willed or done by man, but by God, and man would only have been the instrument. In the same way as man can cooperate with God's grace, so also can he do the opposite and resist divine grace.

Moses said to the Israelites, upon Mount Sinai, before giving the commandments: "To-day if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Psalm xciv. 87). A hardened heart is deaf and without feeling for the suggestions and inspirations of God.

To what should the consideration of the grace of assistance lead us? 1. To the knowledge of our own frailty and helplessness. 2. To the realization of the fact that, as of our own strength we can not begin, continue, or accomplish the least thing toward our eternal salvation, we must pray frequently and fervently to God for His grace of conversion and perseverance, thank Him most fervently for the graces received, and prize the same above everything temporal.

We must not close our heart to divine grace. In various ways God approaches us, sometimes by evident blessings, and then again by sufferings and afflictions. It is for us to open our eyes and our ears, to recognize God, and to hold out our hand to Him when He offers us His assistance. Holy Scripture says: "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come to him and will sup with him" (Apoc. iii. 20).

If men, therefore, will open the door to the good Lord, He will visit them and take up His abode with them, unite them intimately to Himself and remain with them for time and eternity.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is our destiny—for what reason are we upon earth? We are upon earth to know God, to love Him, to serve Him, and to be happy with Him forever.

2. Does man's strength avail to reach this goal? No; man's strength is too weak.

3. What, therefore, did I say of man's vocation? You called it one unattainable by his own powers.

4. Who comes to man's help, in order that he may attain his end? The good God comes to his assistance.

5. With what does God come to man's aid? With His grace.

6. What do we call the means by which God comes to our assistance? The means of grace.

7. What natural powers has man? Man has natural powers of the body and powers of the soul.

8. Name some of the natural powers of the soul. Some of the natural powers of the soul are: understanding, reason, free will, imagination, memory.

9. Now has man all these natural powers of body and of soul of himself, or from some one else? Man has all these natural powers from God.

10. Are natural powers sufficient to attain eternal salvation? No; these natural powers are not sufficient to obtain eternal salvation.

11. What do we understand by divine grace? By the grace of God we here understand an internal supernatural help or gift, which God communicates to us, through the merits of Jesus Christ, for our eternal salvation.

12. What does the word grace denote? The word grace denotes: 1. The good will and benevolent feeling of a superior toward an inferior. 2. The operation of this benevolent feeling, namely, the benefits derived therefrom by the inferior.

13. The Catechism calls grace a help; when is help necessary? Help is necessary when need or danger threatens.

14. What kind of help is divine grace? Divine grace is an internal, supernatural help.

15. What is contrary to the internal, supernatural help and grace? The external natural help.

16. What, for instance, are life, health, sound limbs, food, drink, clothing, etc.? They are external and natural gifts from God's favor.

17. To what end does God dispense them to us? For our earthly well being.

18. Why does God grant us internal, supernatural help? For the welfare of our soul; for eternal salvation.

19. Through whose merits does God grant us His grace? Through the merits of Jesus Christ.

20. What did our first parents lose by their fall? They lost the love, the grace, and the favor of God.

21. What did they draw down upon themselves instead? They drew down upon themselves the anger and displeasure of God.

22. Who inherits this displeasure of God? All their descendants.

23. Who redeemed mankind from this displeasure? Our divine Saviour, Jesus Christ.

24. Why could He alone take away God's displeasure from man? Because the offense to the Infinite Majesty could not be expiated by a finite being.

25. To what have we to give thanks that God gives us this grace? To the infinite merits of Jesus Christ.

26. To what end does God grant us His grace? God grants us His grace for our eternal happiness.

27. How many kinds of this supernatural help and gift, or of grace, properly so called, are there? There are two kinds: 1. The grace of assistance, or actual grace, also called transient grace. 2. The grace of sanctification or justification, called also habitual grace.

28. In what does actual grace, or the grace of assistance, consist? It consists in this: that God enlightens our understanding and inclines our will to avoid evil, and to will and to do that which is good.

29. Actual grace is called transient; what is transient? That is called transient which lasts only for a time and then ceases.

30. Which grace is enduring or lasting? Sanctifying grace, or the grace of justification.

31. How can man make this grace enduring and lasting? When he does not commit mortal sin.

32. Upon which powers of the soul then does the actual grace of God operate? It operates: 1. Upon the understanding, which it enlightens. 2. Upon the will, which it inclines to avoid evil, and to will and to do good.

33. When God calls us what must we do? We must listen to His voice.

34. Is the grace of assistance necessary to us? It is so necessary that without it we can not do the least thing toward the beginning, continuation, or accomplishment of our salvation.

35. Does God give His grace to all men? Yes; God gives to all men sufficient grace that they may work out their salvation.

36. Why must we lay particular stress upon this truth? Because there have been heretics who taught just the contrary.

37. What is the relation of God to us? God is our loving Father.

38. What, therefore, does God wish for us? That all mankind should be saved.

39. What would God be if He only gave His grace to some and not to others? God would be unjust, which is an impossible thing.

40. What grace does God give to sinners? The grace of conversion.

41. What grace does God impart to the just? The grace of perseverance.

42. Does God impart His grace to all men in the same measure? No; God does not impart His grace to all men in the same measure.

43. Why is this? We do not know. That is known to God's wisdom alone.

44. From which parable does this appear? From the parable of the talents.

45. Now as God imparts His grace to men, what must they do on their part? They must not resist His grace but cooperate faithfully with it.

46. To what does the doctrine of grace lead us? To the knowledge of our weakness and the need of humility.

Learn, therefore, from to-day's instruction frequently and fervently to ask God for the grace of assistance.

II.—The Grace of Sanctification, or Justification.

Dear Children: In the last instruction we spoke of actual grace, or the grace of assistance, and to-day we will consider the grace of sanctification or justification.

What is sanctifying grace?

Sanctifying grace is a gratuitous supernatural gift, which God communicates to our souls, by which from sinners we are made just children of God and heirs of heaven.

Sanctifying grace is, therefore, a gratuitous or free gift. Whatever man deserves in any way, that is his due, his merit. The grace of God, however, can not be merited. It is, furthermore, a supernatural gift; it is not, therefore, part of man's being and creature, but it is an independent and special gift of a higher kind. Through the sin of our first parents we are born in sin, and from this state of disgrace, we are by this grace transferred into the state of favor and are received by God as His children. It is, furthermore, a promotion of man into association with the divine nature.

Sanctifying grace is in contrast with transient grace, a permanent gift, a lasting state of the soul. It is, therefore, called the supernatural life of the soul.

Sanctifying grace is imparted to us by the Holy Ghost. Yet this is not to be understood as if God the Father and God the Son did not take part in our sanctification, but the works of charity, and, therefore, the work of sanctification, are attributed in a special manner to the Holy Ghost.

Sanctifying grace produces an entire change in us, transforming us from sinners into just, into children of God, and heirs of heaven. It purifies man, not only from all sin, so that in the just there is no longer anything that deserves damnation, but with it is joined the friendship of God and the heirship of heaven.

In the same way as iron when heated in the fire retains its substance and its nature, but acquires the heat, the appearance, and other qualities of the fire, so does man in the state of grace still remain man, yet he shares in the divine attributes, hence he can say with the apostle: "I live, yet not I, but the grace of God in me."

Why is sanctifying grace called a gratuitous gift?

Because it is an entirely free gift from the compassionate love of God.

No dead person can raise himself to life again; God alone can give the natural and supernatural life. God from pure love and mercy has called man to a supernatural life, and bestows it upon him without his merit, just as He bestowed the natural life. God grants us His grace without merit of ours, because there is nothing, neither faith nor good works, that would merit the grace of justification. Holy Scripture says: "All being justified freely (i. e., without their desert) by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 23). Grace can never be obtained by natural powers, because man can only obtain real supernatural merit when already in the state of sanctifying grace.

Why is sanctifying grace called also "grace of justification"?

Because by sanctifying grace man is justified—that is, he passes from the state of sin to the state of righteousness and holiness. Justification does not only mean the remission of sins, not merely an external favor of God's, or imputing of Christ's righteousness, but it renders a man just or righteous. It actually justifies man, that is, makes man just. Justification means: To replace one who has been guilty of sin in the state of innocence.

What then does the justification of the sinner include?

Justification includes: 1. Purification from all sins grievous, at least, together with the remission of eternal punishment; and, 2. Sanctification.

As there is a cleansing of the body from defilement, by soap and water, so is there also a spiritual purification, consisting in God's justifying us, effacing and actually wiping out our sins, and not as heretics teach, only covering up our sins.

Besides the remission of sin, we receive also the remission of the deserved eternal punishment, for a punishment can only be inflicted where there is guilt. Now as God by our justification has taken away the cause of the punishment—the guilt—therefore, there can be no punishment.

A further result of our justification is the sanctification of our inner self. God's sanctity consists in this: that God loves the good and hates and abhors the evil, and God's grace operates in us in a like manner by making us also love the good and hate and abhor evil.

To renew means to make new something old. The grace of God destroys in man not only the old life of sin, and remits the eternal punishment, but imparts also a new life of grace, a supernatural life of holiness, and confers the right to heaven. Holy Writ says:

"You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God" (I. Cor. vi. 11).

What first gives rise to the justification of the sinner?

Preventing grace, which enlightens the sinner, and incites him to turn to God. God could let man go to perdition in his sins, but God "desires not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his way and live" (Ezech. xxxiii. 11). His love and mercy are, as it were, greater than His justice. God approaches the sinner, as it were, to move him to return. The father might have turned the prodigal son from the house, but he did not. Here apply the following words of Holy Scripture: "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock." What infinite love! The Creator goes to meet the creature, the Master to the servant, God Himself to man, the eternal Judge to the offender, to save him from perdition.

In what way does preventing grace operate? It enlightens man and incites him to turn to God.

The understanding of man is clouded and darkened. The sinner stands on the brink of an abyss that threatens him with eternal death, and he perceives it not. Preventing grace incites the sinner to turn to God. What persons have to be urged? Those who are sunk in heedlessness. To what must the sinner be urged? To turn to God. Why must the sinner turn back? Because he is on the path that leads to ruin and because it is difficult for him to abandon his sins and begin a better life. The sinner resembles a man who tarries in a house threatened with collapse. The foolish man has to be removed by force from the awful death which threatens him.

What must the sinner do on his part in order to attain to justification?

He must, with the assistance of grace:

1. Believe, hope, and begin to love God, and repent his sins.

2. Receive the Sacrament of Baptism, or if he is already baptized, the Sacrament of Penance.

Man has by sin voluntarily turned away from God. If desirous to obtain justification, he must voluntarily return to God. This he can not do without preventing grace. Several stages precede justification, especially:

1. Faith, which is the foundation of our salvation. "He that cometh to God must believe" (Heb. xi. 6). The sinner must be convinced that the way of sin leads to hell, and that he can only be saved therefrom by returning to God.

2. To faith must be joined also hope, the hope of forgiveness; for he who has it not is in despair.

3. Hope of forgiveness incites the sinner to love Him who had the right and the authority to punish him, but grants him pardon instead.

To love contrition is naturally joined, for he who acknowledges that he has offended his greatest Benefactor will repent his misdeeds.

4. Repentance will urge him to cleanse his heart from sin by receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, or Penance, and leading a better life.

Faith, hope, love, repentance, and good resolutions are all in vain if the sinner does not receive the Sacrament of Baptism, or of Penance. All men come into the world burdened with original sin, from which they are cleansed in the Sacrament of Baptism. Man, however, commits actual, personal sins, not inherited, and these are ordinarily remitted in the Sacrament of Penance.

But for all these steps to sanctification, man needs actual grace, the grace of assistance.

What does the sinner receive in the Sacrament of Baptism or Penance?

He receives sanctifying grace, whereby he is actually made just, acceptable to God, a child of God, and heir of heaven.

Through either of these two holy sacraments the sinner is actually made just, that is, his sins are not merely covered over and the punishment due them remitted, but the sins are utterly wiped out and effaced, as completely as if they had never been committed. Hereby also the original relation between God and man is renewed: man is again a child and friend of God, and with the friendship of God he obtains again his title to the kingdom of heaven.

How long does sanctifying grace remain in the soul of the justified man?

As long as he does not commit mortal sin.

Do venial sins also banish God's grace?

No; they do not, but they lessen its operations.

What fruits may the justified man produce by the help of grace?

He may perform meritorious works.

What of those works which although good in themselves are committed in mortal sin?

They have no merit for heaven.

What accordingly must a man do if he has had the misfortune to commit a grievous sin?

He must again place himself in a state of grace through the Sacrament of Penance. Without the love of God there is no merit; the sinner has not the love of God, consequently his good works are without merit or value.

Is the good which a man does in the state of sin quite useless? No; on the contrary, it is very useful in order to obtain from the divine compassion the grace of conversion and the averting of temporal punishment.

Through good works which man performs in the state of sin, he obtains more easily the grace of conversion. Thus King Nabuchodonosor was exhorted by the Prophet Daniel to practise good works: "Reduce thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor; perhaps God will forgive thy offences" (Dan. iv. 24).

An example is furnished in the instance of the inhabitants of the City of Ninive, who by penance saved themselves from the temporal ruin which threatened them.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of the grace of sanctification or justification.

2. What is sanctifying grace, or the grace of justification? It is a gratuitous supernatural gift.

3. Why does the Catechism call sanctifying grace a gift and not a help? Because God grants us this grace not for a time only, but He intends that it may remain with us.

4. Why does the Catechism call sanctifying grace a supernatural gift? Because it does not belong to the natural gifts, which God grants to every man at his creation.

5. Mention some of these natural gifts. Body and soul, understanding, reason and free will.

6. How was the divine resemblance destroyed in the soul of man? By the sin of our first parents.

7. What did all mankind lose through original sin? They lost the grace and friendship of God and their title to the kingdom of heaven.

8. In what way may they regain these lost gifts? By sanctifying grace.

9. Who imparts sanctifying grace to us? The Holy Ghost.

10. Why do we say that the Holy Ghost imparts sanctifying grace? Because the works of charity and sanctification are attributed in a special way to the Holy Spirit.

11. Do the Father and Son also take part in our sanctification? Yes; the Father and the Son also take part in it.

12. What does sanctifying grace produce in us? It produces a change in us.

13. In what does this change consist? From sinners it makes us just, children of God, heirs of heaven.

14. How many kinds of sin may a man have upon his soul? Original sin and actual sin.

15. Who are burdened with original sin? The unbaptized.

16. What sins can a baptized man have upon his soul? Actual sins.

17. What removes original and actual sin from our souls? Sanctifying grace.

18. What does every man become through sin? An enemy of God.

19. But what does he become through sanctifying grace? A child of God and an heir to the kingdom of heaven.

20. Why is sanctifying grace called a gratuitous gift? Because it is a perfectly free gift from the compassionate love of God.

21. Do we merit this gift from God? No; we do not merit it.

22. What words of Scripture show this? "All are justified freely through His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

23. Who, by His death upon the cross, merited and obtained for us the grace of God? Our divine Saviour, Jesus Christ.

24. Why is sanctifying grace also called the grace of justification? Because through sanctifying grace man is justified, that is, from a state of sin he is reinstated in a state of justice and holiness.

25. The first effect of justification, therefore, is cleansing from all, or at least from all grievous sins.

26. What might we also call the grace of justification? A spiritual bath or new birth.

27. Does God efface our sins utterly, or does He merely cover them up to let us go unpunished? God actually effaces our sins, as utterly as if they had never been.

28. What else is joined to the remission of sins? The remission of the eternal punishment due them.

29. Who renders himself deserving of eternal punishment? A man who commits mortal sin.

30. How does man's sanctification show itself? It shows itself by man's taking pleasure in that which is good and abhorring all evil.

31. What then takes place in man by sanctifying grace? A change of feeling, or renewing of the interior man.

32. What first gives rise to the justification of the sinner? Preventing grace, which enlightens the sinner and incites him to turn to God.

33. How does God's grace incite man to turn to God? By the voice of conscience, by hearing the word of God, by sufferings and afflictions, and other occurrences.

34. What might God in His justice do to the sinner? God might allow him to die in his sins.

35. Why does not God do this? Because God does not wish the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live.

36. What must the sinner do on his part, in order to attain to justification? He must, with the assistance of grace, voluntarily turn to God, and believe all that God has revealed, especially that we are justified by Jesus Christ.

37. What ought the sinner chiefly to believe? He must believe that the path he is on leads to hell.

38. What must necessarily be joined to faith? The hope of forgiveness.

39. In what state is the sinner who has no hope of forgiveness? He is in despair.

40. To what does hope lead the sinner? To the love of God.

41. What ought to be joined to love? Repentance.

42. To what will repentance lead the sinner? To the desire to be reconciled with God.

43. What else must man do to possess sanctifying grace? He must receive the holy sacraments for the forgiveness of sins.

44. Which sacraments are these? The sacraments of Baptism and of Penance.

45. What does man receive in either of these Sacraments? He receives sanctifying grace, whereby he is made really just, pleasing to God, a child of God, and heir of heaven.

46. What is the consequence of this forgiveness of sins? By the forgiveness of sins the good relations between God and man are renewed.

47. How long now will God remain with the justified man? God desires to remain always with the justified man.

48. What, however, must man do that sanctifying grace may remain in him? He must not commit a mortal sin.

49. Do venial sins also drive God from our souls? Venial sins do not drive God from our hearts, but they are obstacles to the operations of divine grace.

50. What fruits does the justified man produce with the aid of grace? Good, that is meritorious works, for every good tree brings forth good fruit.

51. Can man in the state of mortal sin do no good? Yes; he can do good, but without merit for heaven.

52. What good works can the sinner do without grace? He can pray, fast, give alms, visit the sick, etc.

53. Why are the sinner's good works without merit for heaven? Because a sinner's good works are wanting in charity.

54. To what should the doctrine of grace incite us? To humility.

55. Why? Because man with all his privileges is not capable of doing anything for his eternal salvation without God's grace.

56. To what else should the doctrine of divine grace incite us? To prayer.

57. What should we ask of God every day? The grace of assistance and the grace of conversion.

58. To what should we be still further incited by the doctrine of grace? To gratitude.

59. To what further? We should listen to the inspirations of divine grace and not close the door to God.

60. To what further should we be incited? To watchfulness.

61. Why to watchfulness? So that we may not lose the divine grace through sin.

III.—On the Grace of Sanctification.—Continued.

Dear Children: We heard in the last instruction that only those good works of ours which we perform in the state of grace are meritorious for heaven.

What is it that we merit by our good works in the state of grace? We merit, 1. An increase of sanctifying grace; and, 2. Eternal salvation. Man of his own power can not merit sanctifying grace, because he can not merit anything unless he has already sanctifying grace; but he can merit an increase of sanctifying grace. In the Book of Proverbs we read: "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward, and increaseth even to perfect day." As grace corresponds to glory, so does the just man also merit eternal salvation. We have proof of this from Holy Scripture. "Every one will receive the reward according to his works, that is, according to his deserts." Whosoever sows abundantly will reap abundantly, and he who sows little will also reap little. We have already heard what heaven is: "A happiness which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Now, if so great a reward is promised to us for our meritorious works, it ought to encourage us to strive to obtain this reward. Good works performed in the state of grace have, moreover, not only meritorious value, but also the power of atonement; for the Council of Trent has declared that by good works we may render satisfaction for temporal punishment due to sin. Now, we will ask the question, Is it permissible to do good for the sake of reward? Answer: To do good only for the sake of reward would be selfish, for, as we have learned, our love of God should be sufficient motive for us to practise virtue. It is not forbidden in doing good works to keep before our minds the glorious reward which God has promised us, but it is an act of self love. God Himself has implanted within us a longing for happiness, and no matter how well a man is provided for in this world, he will never be perfectly contented; he feels that there must be something which far surpasses the happiness of this world. Holy Scripture even invites us to rejoice at this glorious reward: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

Whence do the good works which we perform in the state of

grace derive their meritorious value? From the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, whose living members we become through sanctifying grace.

Holy Scripture says: "There is salvation in none other but in Jesus." All the good works which we perform in the state of grace are united to the merits of Jesus Christ, who by His death upon the cross obtained for us the grace of God, and thereby placed us in a position to perform meritorious works.

Just as the members of a body are in connection with its head, and as the life of the members ceases should the head be separated from the body, and just as the branches of the vine can not bring forth fruit, if they are not connected with the root, so we can merit nothing by our good works except through the merits of Jesus Christ, with whom we are united through grace. The good works performed by us in the state of grace, however, do not cease to be in themselves meritorious, nor do they lessen the merits of Jesus Christ. Is every Christian bound to do good works? Yes; for "Every tree that doth not yield good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. iii. 10).

The word bound means that we are compelled. As we are bound to do good works, he who does them not may expect eternal damnation. This is taught us by our divine Saviour in the parable of the barren fig-tree. Also in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, and that of the idle servant. It is taught us also in the description of the last judgment, where the omission of works of mercy is given as deserving damnation. We learned in our lessons on the doctrine of faith that we are upon earth to serve God, and to merit heaven by good works. For this reason God has granted us powers of body and powers of soul, and for this reason God also grants us His grace.

In Holy Scripture we are told that "The gate is narrow and the path is strait"; "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and those only who use violence will bear it away."

How many kinds of good works are there? They may be divided into works which are of obligation, and works which are merely counseled.

The good works to the performance of which we are obliged, are:

1. Those prescribed by the commandments of God or the Church;

2. Those to which a certain calling or vocation oblige; as, for instance, those of parents and children, employers and employés, etc.

The ordinary duties of the Christian, and the special obligations of our state of life, must always have preference over voluntary good works. The Christian, however, should not content himself merely with practising the good works which he is bound to do, but also voluntarily perform others.

What other good works does Holy Scripture especially recommend?

Praying, fasting, and alms; by these we understand works of devotion, mortification, and charity. Holy Scripture says: "Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold" (Tob. xii. 8).

By the word "praying" we mean here not only prayer itself, but all acts of devotion, sacrifice, praise, and thanksgiving to God, vocal prayer, meditation, the reading of good books, listening to the word of God in sermons and instructions.

Fasting comprises deprivation in eating and drinking, the abstaining from lawful and forbidden worldly pleasures and enjoyments.

The word alms denotes all corporal and spiritual works of mercy, any help and assistance rendered to our fellow men in body or soul. By these three virtues we overcome the three arch enemies of our salvation, namely, the pride of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the worship of temporal wealth. Through the three virtues above mentioned, man has the opportunity (a) To make satisfaction for the sins he has committed; (b) To preserve himself from sin; (c) To gain merit. The aims and pursuits of most men, however, are directed toward entirely different matters, for the spirit of the world is in direct opposition to the spirit of Christ. "Enjoy life while you are living" is the world's motto, and as a merry life can only be had by means of money, the ideas and aims of worldlings are directed toward the attaining the means to satisfy their desires.

What does God especially regard in our good works?

Our good intention, by which we may obtain from God great reward even for small works.

By good intention is understood the good disposition we have in doing something good. Some do good from vanity, so as to be seen and praised by others, as the Pharisees did; others again do good from selfish motives, and there are others who do good from the noblest of all motives: for the love of God. An act good in itself loses its entire value if it is performed with an unworthy

motive. Hence Holy Scripture tells us the story of the widow's mite, of which Jesus said that in the eyes of God it has a greater value than the large offering of the Pharisee, who gave his donation with the intention of being seen and praised.

What is a good intention?

The purpose or positive act of the will, to serve God and to honor Him.

Our intention is good, therefore, when we, 1. Have the will to serve God, to do His will, to keep His commandments, and to fulfil our duties; 2. When we have the will to glorify God and to increase His honor. Every intention is good that arises from faith and love.

When should we make a good intention?

We ought to do so several times a day, and especially every morning.

How may we make a good intention?

By saying: "O my God, I offer up to Thee all my thoughts, words, and deeds, for Thy honor and glory."

We should, therefore, make good intentions on awaking and arising, when performing a good work, before and after work, in suffering and misfortune, etc. In this way we may sanctify our whole lives; no unholy thought will enter into our minds, no evil word escape our lips, and we shall have no bad deeds to repent of.

What means must we particularly use in order to obtain grace?

The Holy Sacraments and prayer.

Since we know that without grace we can not begin the least thing meritorious for salvation, or continue, and accomplish anything, we must inquire for the way and means by which we may be placed in the possession of grace.

The Catechism gives us two means:

1. The Holy Sacraments, and 2. Prayer. As the thirsty pant after the spring of water, that they may quench their thirst, so should man have a longing desire to receive the grace of God, in order to be united to God, and to remain united to Him, and with God's grace to work out his salvation.

Do both these means give us grace in the same manner and in the same measure?

No; the Sacraments *produce* grace in us; prayer *obtains* it for us; through the Sacraments we obtain those special graces for which they were instituted; while because of prayer we receive all sorts of graces, except those which can be obtained only by the Sacraments.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What doctrine have we spoken of to-day? The doctrine of grace.

2. What good works are meritorious in the sight of God? Only those good works which we perform in the state of grace.

3. What do we merit for ourselves by good works performed in the state of grace? We merit: 1. An increase of sanctifying grace. 2. Eternal happiness.

4. What means to increase? To increase means: to make more of what is already there.

5. Where, therefore, can there be no question of an increase? Where there is nothing to be increased.

6. Can we of ourselves merit the grace of God? No; we can not do so.

7. What can we merit for ourselves? An increase of sanctifying grace.

8. By what passage of Scripture can you prove this? "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward, and increaseth even to perfect day."

9. What else do we merit by the good works which we perform in the state of grace? We also merit eternal salvation.

10. What is salvation? Eternal happiness in the mansions of God.

11. Will all enjoy eternal happiness in the same degree? No; every one will receive his reward according to his labors, i. e., according to his deserts.

12. Which text of Scripture can you give to prove this? "He who sows abundantly will reap abundantly, and whosoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly."

13. Now if we know that heaven is an inexpressible happiness, to what ought this knowledge incite us? It should incite us to strive with all our strength to attain eternal happiness.

14. May we do good for the sake of the reward? Yes; we may do good for the sake of the reward.

15. Which Scriptural passage proves this? "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

16. What is the best motive to practise virtue? The love of God.

17. Whence do the good works which we perform in the state of grace derive their intrinsic value or meritoriousness? From the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, whose living members we are through sanctifying grace.

18. What do we mean by infinite? That which can have no bounds of any kind.

19. With whose merits, therefore, do our good works stand united? With the merits of Jesus Christ.

20. What has Jesus obtained for us by His death upon the cross? He obtained and merited for us the grace of God.

21. And what can we do with the assistance of divine grace? We can practise meritorious works.

22. Who is our head? Our head is Jesus Christ.

23. Who are the members? The members are mankind.

24. What other comparison did I make use of? That of the vine and the branches.

25. Who is, as it were, the vine? Our divine Saviour, Jesus Christ.

26. Who are the branches? Mankind.

27. Can those branches which are separated from the vine bear fruit? No.

28. Now as the merits of Jesus Christ alone render our good works meritorious for salvation do not our good works cease entirely to be of themselves meritorious? No; our good works have also a merit of their own.

29. Is every Christian bound to do good works? Yes; for "every tree that doth not yield good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire."

30. What has God given us in order that we may do good? God has given us corporal and spiritual powers, and He also grants us His grace.

31. And he who in spite of this will not do good, what has he to expect? Eternal perdition.

32. Which parables from the Bible give us proof of this? That of the barren fig tree, the parables of the wise and foolish virgins, that of the idle servant. (These should be recited by the pupils.)

33. In the introduction of the doctrine of faith the question is asked, "To what end are we upon earth?" What is the answer? "We are here upon earth to know God, to love Him, to serve Him, and thereby get to heaven."

34. What will become of those who will not know God, nor love and serve Him? God will reject them for all eternity.

35. Where will those persons go who are eternally rejected by God? Into everlasting fire.

36. How many kinds of good works are there? There are good works which we must perform, and others which are only counseled.

37. Which good works are strictly commanded? 1. Those good works imposed upon Christians by the commandments. 2. Those to which a person is obliged on account of his position or calling.

38. Mention some duties of one's state of life. The duties of parents and children, of superiors and inferiors, etc.

39. Which good works must have preference? The ordinary Christian duties, and the particular duties of our calling.

40. How many good works should the Christian perform? As many as he possibly can.

41. Which good works are recommended to us by Holy Scripture? Prayer, fasting, and alms.

42. What should these three virtues deaden in us? The three arch enemies of our salvation.

43. What are the three enemies of our salvation? 1. The pride of the eye. 2. The lust of the flesh. 3. The worship of temporal wealth.

44. What do most persons forget in striving for gain and possessions? They forget the care of their souls.

45. What does God especially regard in our good works? Our good intention, by which we obtain from God great reward even for small works.

46. From which two virtues should all good intentions arise? From faith and charity.

47. When should we make a good intention? It is very good to make it several times a day, and especially every morning.

48. What means must we particularly use in order to obtain grace? The holy sacraments and prayer.

49. Do both these means give us grace in the same manner and in the same degree? No; the sacraments *produce* grace in us; prayer *obtains* it for us. Through the sacraments we obtain those special graces for which they were instituted; but through prayer we receive all sorts of graces except those which can only be obtained by the sacraments.

50. What is the application? Strive most carefully to preserve sanctifying grace continually in your heart by avoiding sin, and performing good works.

IV.—The Holy Sacraments in General.

Dear Children: At our last instruction we learned what are the means of grace, namely, the Holy Sacraments and Prayer. Now, we are going to explain the sacraments.

What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is an outward sign, instituted by Jesus Christ, by which invisible grace is communicated to our souls.

What does this word sacrament mean?

It means a sacred token, a holy action, something mysterious (hidden) and holy. The Holy Sacraments have a mysterious significance, and contain a hidden grace, effect our inner sanctification; for this reason we always speak of them as *Holy* Sacraments.

A sacrament is, then, an outward sign. We call *sign* something which leads us to the knowledge of a certain fact. Thus we learn from the sign of footsteps in the ground that somebody has passed that way, leaving behind these imprints. What we see is visible. Something, then, takes place at the administering of the Holy Sacraments that we can see or appreciate by our senses. Thus we *see,* for instance, at Holy Baptism, how the priest pours water over the infant and we *hear* him say the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

We *see* in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar how the priest takes the Sacred Host and places it upon the tongue of the communicant, and so forth. In every sacrament we have what is called the *matter* and the *form.* Thus in Baptism, water is the *matter* and the words said while the water is being poured are the *form.* Matter and form must be closely united. Thus the baptizing priest must say the prescribed words while in the act of pouring the water, neither before nor after.

To the question which has sometimes arisen, "Why has Jesus Christ connected the administration of the sacraments with visible signs?" the Church answers:

1. Christ made use of certain signs when conferring spiritual and corporal benefits on people; for instance: "He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon the eyes of the man born blind.

2. Man is a material being and, accordingly, needs material, visible signs.

3. God intended, in His inscrutable wisdom, visible creation to be the medium of divine grace to be given to man.

What is necessary to constitute a sacrament?

Three things are necessary to constitute a sacrament, namely:

1. A visible sign.

2. An invisible grace.

3. Institution by Jesus Christ.

These three points are absolutely necessary for the constitution of a sacrament. If one of the three is missing, there is no sacrament.

What graces do the sacraments effect?

1. They communicate or increase sanctifying grace.

2. Each sacrament communicates other special graces, according to the end for which it has been instituted.

If the Holy Sacrament had no other purpose than to impart sanctifying grace, there would have been no necessity for seven sacraments; one sacrament would have been sufficient. Therefore, we find in each sacrament a special grace, which is not to be found in any of the other sacraments.

How must we receive the sacraments in order that they may produce these graces in us?

We must prepare ourselves well for them, and receive them worthily.

What sin does he commit who receives one of the sacraments unworthily?

He commits a very grievous sin, called a sacrilege.

Does not the efficacy of the sacraments also depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of those who administer them?

No; for the sacraments derive their efficacy from the merits of Jesus Christ, by whom they were instituted, and not from the one who administers them.

How many sacraments did Jesus institute?

He instituted seven:

The Sacraments of Baptism, of Confirmation, of the Holy Eucharist, of Penance, of Extreme Unction, of Holy Orders, and of Matrimony.

How do we know that there are seven sacraments?

We know this because the Church, "which is the pillar and ground of the truth," has at all times taught and used these seven.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted just as many sacraments

as are necessary to the supernatural life of man. For as man is first born, then grows up, acquires strength, is supplied with nourishing food in order to preserve life and to increase his strength, etc., so also is he, 1. Born in Baptism to the supernatural life; gains, 2. In Confirmation strength and growth; receives, 3. In Holy Communion a divine nourishment; finds, 4. In Penance a remedy to heal the diseases of the soul, and to restore him to the state of grace; and gets, 5. In Extreme Unction assistance and strength against despair and the last assaults of the devil. 6. In Holy Orders, the powers of administrating the means of grace necessary to the supernatural life are propagated; and 7. In Matrimony, the union between man and wife is blessed, so that being sanctified themselves, they may also teach their children to lead a holy life, and thus help them to attain eternal life.

The sacraments are divided:

1. Into sacraments of the living and sacraments of the dead. And 2. Into such as can be received only once and such as can be received more than once.

The sacraments of the living are: 1. Confirmation; 2. Holy Eucharist; 3. Extreme Unction; 4. Holy Orders, and 5. Matrimony.

They are called the sacraments of the living because, in order to receive them, we must have supernatural life—that is, sanctifying grace. One of these, the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, may in a case of necessity be received without due preparation.

The sacraments of the dead are: Baptism and Penance.

They are called the sacraments of the dead because, when we receive them, we either have not, or, at least, are not obliged to have the life of grace.

The sacraments which can be received only once are Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. They can be received only once because they imprint upon the soul a character or spiritual mark which remains forever, and which consecrates and dedicates the recipient in a special manner to the service of God.

The Holy Fathers call this indelible character a holy, inextinguishable seal. The spiritual mark imprinted upon our soul is in Baptism that of a child of the Kingdom of God; in Confirmation that of a soldier of Christ, and in Holy Orders that of a leader in the combat.

But the reception of this spiritual mark imposes upon us the

duty of preserving ourselves unspotted, and of fulfilling faithfully those duties of a child of the Kingdom of God, of a soldier of Christ, or of a priest. The ceremonies which are used in the administrations of the sacraments have been received by us from the Church, which, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has ordained them for the increase of our devotion and reverence.

The word *ceremony* means an exterior form accompanying a solemn act. The eternal signs belonging to a sacrament were not instituted by the Church, but by Jesus Christ Himself, and the Church can not and will not change anything in these signs. But the Church has added certain ceremonies which are especially intended to remind us of the sanctity and sublimity of the sacraments.

Application.—Esteem the Holy Sacraments as most precious Means of Grace instituted by Christ; give fervent thanks to God for them, and beware of profaning them by unworthily receiving them.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What was the subject of our lesson to-day? The Holy Sacraments.

2. What does the word "sacrament" mean? It means a sacred token, a holy action, something mysterious (hidden) and holy.

3. What is a sacrament? A sacrament is: An outward sign, instituted by Jesus Christ, by which invisible grace is communicated to our souls.

4. A sacrament then is a visible sign. What do we call a sign? We call a sign something which leads us to the knowledge of a certain fact.

5. What do we learn from footsteps in the ground? That somebody has passed that way.

6. What signs do we see, for instance, at Baptism? We see the priest pouring water upon the head of the person he is baptizing.

7. What do we see at the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar? We see the priest placing the Sacred Host upon the tongue of the Communicant.

8. What double element have we to consider in the administration of the Sacraments? Matter and form.

9. What, for instance, is the matter and what the form of Baptism? The water is the matter and the words, which the priest says at the same time, are the form.

10. Why has Jesus Christ connected the administration of His means of grace with visible signs? Because in many of His miracles He made use of certain signs.

11. What is necessary to constitute a sacrament? 1. A visible sign. 2. An invisible grace. 3. The institution by Jesus Christ.

12. Are all three necessary? Yes; all three are necessary.

13. What graces do the sacraments confer? 1. They communicate or increase sanctifying grace. 2. Each sacrament communicates other special graces according to the end for which it has been instituted.

14. How must we receive the sacraments in order that they may produce these graces in us? We must receive them worthily.

15. What does he commit who receives one of the sacraments unworthily? He commits a very grievous sin, called sacrilege.

16. Does not the efficacy of the sacraments depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of those who administer them? No; the sacraments derive their efficacy from the merits of Jesus Christ, by whom they were instituted, and not from the one who administers them.

17. How many sacraments did our Lord institute? Seven.

18. Name them. Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

19. How do we know that there are seven sacraments? We know it because the Church, "which is the pillar and ground of truth," has at all times taught and used these seven.

20. What sacrament does the new-born child receive? The Sacrament of Baptism.

21. With what is every human being burdened when entering into this world? With original sin.

22. What effect has Baptism? It takes away original sin and imparts sanctifying grace.

23. As the new-born child grows in body from year to year, so it must also grow in supernatural life. Why? Because it must be able to battle against the temptations which it will meet day after day.

24. What sacrament does it receive for this purpose? The Sacrament of Confirmation.

25. What is the effect of this sacrament? It makes us strong and steadfast in our faith.

26. As man needs food and drink to maintain his natural life, so likewise does he need food for his soul. How does he obtain food for his soul? Through the Holy Eucharist.

27. But in spite of this supernatural help weak man falls again and again into sin. What sacrament must he receive to lead him back into the state of grace? The Sacrament of Penance.

28. What effect has the Sacrament of Penance? The remission of sin and the regaining of sanctifying grace.

29. What sacrament is to be received when man is ending the long battle of life and death is approaching? The Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

30. What is the effect of this sacrament? It gives patience in suffering and strength to overcome the temptations of the devil, and grace to persevere to the end.

31. What sacrament gives to priests the power of the priesthood? The Sacrament of Holy Orders.

32. Which sacrament enables parents to bring up their children for God and eternal life? The Sacrament of Matrimony.

33. How are the sacraments divided? They are divided into Sacraments of the Living and Sacraments of the Dead.

34. Name the Sacraments of the Living. Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

35. Why are they called Sacraments of the Living? Because, in order to receive them we must have supernatural life; that is, sanctifying grace.

36. What must we do before receiving the Sacraments of the Living? We must prepare ourselves worthily by a good confession.

37. There is one of these sacraments which may be received even without due preparation in case of necessity. Which is it? The Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

38. Name the Sacraments of the Dead. The Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Penance.

39. Why are they called the Sacraments of the Dead? Because, when receiving them, we either have not, or at least are not obliged to have, the life of grace.

40. In what other way are the sacraments divided? Into sacraments which can be received only once and sacraments which may be received more than once.

41. Name the sacraments that can be received but once. Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

42. Why can they be received only once? Because they imprint upon the soul an indelible character, or spiritual mark, which consecrates and dedicates the recipient in a special manner to the service of God.

43. What ineffaceable mark does Baptism put upon us? It makes us children of the kingdom of God.

44. What does Confirmation make of us? It makes us Soldiers of Christ.

45. What effect has the Sacrament of Holy Orders? It makes the priest a leader in the combat for heaven.

46. What does the reception of this spiritual mark impose upon us? It imposes upon us the duty of preserving this character unspotted and of fulfilling faithfully the duties of children of God and soldiers of Christ.

47. What are ceremonies? They are exterior forms, which in the administration of the sacraments are used together with the signs instituted by Christ.

48. How were they handed down to us? They were handed down to us by the Church.

49. Under whose guidance did the Church create them? Under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

50. And for what purpose? For the purpose of increasing our devotion and reverence.

51. What did I tell you in the conclusion of this lesson on the Sacraments in general? That we should reverence them as most precious Means of Grace instituted by the Church and give fervent thanks to God for them, and should not profane them by unworthily receiving them.

V.—On Baptism.

Having explained the nature of the Holy Sacraments in general, we will now proceed to the explanation of each Sacrament, and will begin to-day with the first of the Sacraments, Baptism.

Baptism is the first and most necessary Sacrament, because without it we can not be saved and can not receive validly any of the other Sacraments.

Through Baptism man becomes a member of the Church of Christ. If we are not united to Jesus Christ in His Church we can not partake of His merits.

In order to derive any benefit from food and drink one must be alive; the dead can not partake of food. In the same way man must first receive, through Holy Baptism, a spiritual life, that is, sanctifying grace, before he can partake of spiritual food for his soul, that is the merits of Jesus Christ.

Baptism is the most necessary Sacrament because, without it, no one can enter the Church in order to be saved. Holy Baptism is, as it were, the door to our spiritual life.

If one is to be received into the Church, i. e., into the community of Christians, or into community with Christ, he must, therefore, first receive the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. There are many things necessary for man's natural life: food, drink, clothing, shelter, and the most necessary of all, air. Baptism is so absolutely necessary for our salvation that even if we are innocently deprived of it, we are excluded from eternal salvation. Christ says: "Verily, I say unto you, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God." The Catechism asks: "What is Baptism?" and answers: "Baptism is a Sacrament in which we are cleansed from all sin, and regenerated and sanctified in Christ unto life everlasting."

The Catechism first states that Baptism is a Sacrament, because we find in it three things necessary to constitute a Sacrament.

1. A visible sign: water to be poured on the head of the person to be baptized (the matter), and the utterance of the words: "I baptize thee," etc. (the form). 2. An invisible grace, namely, the remission of original sin, and in adults also of all actual sin which may have been committed. 3. Its institution by Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Why do we say that we are baptized by water and the word of God? Because Baptism is administered by pouring water over the head of the person to be baptized, while at the same time, the words are pronounced: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The pouring of water is a symbol of the purification of the soul, which takes place in Baptism.

The visible sign of Baptism, and its effects, are prefigured: 1. By the water of the Flood, with which the earth was cleansed of all sinners then living. 2. By the passage through the Red Sea. 3. By the prophecy of Ezechiel: "And I will pour upon you clean water and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness."

To give Baptism validly, it is essentially necessary that the water which is used should touch the body or head in such a manner that it can be called an ablution. Baptism may therefore be given by immersion or by pouring the water upon the person to be baptized. Mere sprinkling of the water in Baptism is not allowed. Up to the fourteenth century Baptism was generally given by a threefold immersion; since that time the water is poured, as it was even in olden times, when a great multitude was to be baptized, or if the one to be baptized was on his death-bed. Matter and form must necessarily be intimately connected. Christ Himself gave the form when He said: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These words must be spoken exactly as prescribed during the act of pouring out the water, neither before nor after the act. The Church has never changed the form, and any deviation from the form in words or action will make Baptism invalid.

Why do we say that in Baptism we are cleansed from all sin? Because in Baptism original sin, and all sins committed before Baptism, are forgiven.

Adults as well as infants may be baptized. The latter obtain the remission of original sin, because they have not yet committed any actual sin. Adults obtain not only the remission of original sin, but also remission of all actual sins committed before Baptism.

An adult person must be duly prepared for the reception of this Sacrament, and must repent of his actual sins. If he has no sorrow for the sins actually committed, he receives Baptism unworthily and his sins will not be forgiven him. The effects of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism are as follows:

1. The remission of all sins: (a) Of original sin in the case of infants. (b) Of original sin and of actual sin in the case of adults.

2. The remission of temporal and eternal punishment due to sins.

3. The infusion of sanctifying grace, and of (a) the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. (b) The gifts of the Holy Ghost.

4. All sacramental graces necessary for Christian life.

5. The right of receiving all other Sacraments.

6. The imprinting of an indestructible spiritual sign.

7. A spiritual relationship: (a) Between the baptizer, the baptized, and the latter's parents. (b) Between the sponsors, the baptized, and the latter's parents.

Eternal, as well as temporal punishment of sin is remitted in Baptism. This explains the fact that the Church does not mourn over the death of an infant that has not yet been able to commit actual sin. The priest wears, at the infant's funeral, a white stole instead of a black one, and expresses in his prayer his confidence that the soul of the infant has gone direct to heaven.

Although guilt and punishment of sin are taken away by Baptism, there still remains: 1. The tendency to sin. 2. The law of death and suffering.

The tendency to sin is not sin, although it originates from sin and excites us to sin. These consequences of sin remain in man, and by subduing this tendency we gain great merit.

Why do we say that we are regenerated and sanctified? Because in Baptism we are not only cleansed from all sin, but are also transformed in a spiritual manner—made holy, children of God and heirs to heaven.

By Holy Baptism, therefore, we are not only freed from all sin, but we are also regenerated, recreated in a spiritual manner. We are liberated from our old sinful self and obtain a new self, spiritual and holy.

St. Leo the Great says in regard to this: "While the ablution of the human body takes place outwardly, the inner part is being changed; the old creature becomes a new one; the vessels of wrath (the curse on account of original sin) become vessels of love, and the flesh of sin is changed into a spiritual body; the wicked become just, and the children of man become children of God."

With the adoption as a child of God we naturally acquire the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven.

How is this spiritual regeneration and sanctification effected? It is effected by the grace of sanctification, which, together with the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, are infused into the soul in Baptism.

We have already learned of sanctifying grace and its effects. It is sanctifying grace which regenerates us and makes us children of God. Holy Scripture says in regard to this: "The charity of God is poured forth in our heart by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us."

Charity presupposes on earth, Faith, and Hope, and is inconceivable without them.

The Council of Trent says that justification does not consist only of the forgiveness of sin, but also in the sanctification and regeneration of the inner man by voluntary acceptance of the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

In Holy Baptism the Theological Virtues are also infused into infants, although they are as yet unable to practise them. Like the natural capacities, these spiritual powers slumber in the infant like the seed in the earth. The love for its mother, for instance, lives in the heart of the infant long before it learns to appreciate the care and love bestowed upon it. And thus does God deposit His supernatural gifts into the little heart long before it can practise them. We receive in Baptism the duty and admonition to preserve its grace, and to enable us to do so we receive also the sacramental graces necessary to live in the Faith and practise the Christian virtues. Together with the grace of God the Holy Ghost enters our soul and lives and acts in the soul of the just, which is for this reason called the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

Why do we say that we are regenerated and sanctified "in Christ?" To signify that by all these graces we are united with Christ and incorporated into His Church. All Sacraments derive their efficacy from Jesus Christ, who instituted them. The grace of Baptism is consequently imparted by Christ as a fruit of His Passion and death. By Baptism there comes into existence an intimate union between Christ and the baptized. This is not only an inward, but also an outward union; the baptized becomes part of the mystical body of Christ—His Church.

As a Christian, and as a member of the body of Christ, the baptized person receives an indelible spiritual character, which distinguishes him from all unbaptized, and for this very reason a person can be baptized but once

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak in to-day's lesson? Of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism.

2. What does the Catechism say of Holy Baptism? It is the first and most necessary Sacrament.

3. Why is Baptism the first of the Sacraments? Because without it we can not receive any other Sacrament validly, and must, therefore, precede all the other Sacraments.

4. Why is Baptism the most necessary Sacrament? Because without Baptism no one can enter the Church in order to be saved.

5. If we are deprived of Baptism, even innocently, are we also excluded from eternal salvation? Yes.

6. What does Jesus say about the necessity of Baptism? He says "Verily, I say unto you, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

7. What is Baptism? Baptism is a Sacrament in which we are cleansed from all sin and regenerated and sanctified in Christ unto life everlasting.

8. Why is Baptism a Sacrament? Because we find in it the three things necessary to constitute a Sacrament.

9. Tell me the visible sign, matter, and form. Water, and the pouring out of it, is the matter, and the utterance of the words, "I baptize thee in the name of," etc., is the form.

10. Name the invisible grace. The remission of original sin, and, in adults, also of all actual sins committed before Baptism.

11. Which are the words of institution by Jesus Christ? Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

12. How was Baptism given formerly? By a threefold immersion in water.

13. Why is water used in Baptism? It is used as a symbol of the purification of our soul.

14. How was water used in the Old Testament as a figure of Baptism? By the waters of the Flood, the passage through the Red Sea, and the prophecy of Ezechiel.

15. The properties of water are likewise symbols of the effects of Holy Baptism. For what purpose is water principally used? For cleansing and washing.

16. What cleansing does Baptism cause in us? The cleansing from original sin, and from all sins committed before Baptism.

17. To whom is Baptism necessary? Baptism is necessary to all mankind.

18. How can Baptism be given? 1. By submersion; or, 2. By the pouring of water.

19. How must matter and form be united in Baptism? While the water is being poured the prescribed words must be pronounced.

20. Why do we say that in Baptism we are cleansed from all sin? Because in Baptism original sin and all sins committed before Baptism are forgiven.

21. What sin is remitted when infants are baptized? Original sin.

22. Why not actual sins? Because they have not committed any.

23. What sins are remitted when adults are baptized? Original sin, as well as all actual sins committed before Baptism.

24. What must an adult do who wishes to be baptized? He must prepare himself for Baptism.

25. In what manner? By instruction and repentance.

26. Is the punishment for sin also remitted by Baptism? Yes; eternal as well as temporal punishment is remitted by Baptism.

27. Although sin and punishment are remitted, what, however, remains in the baptized? The tendency to sin.

28. Why do we say that we are regenerated and sanctified to life everlasting? Because in Baptism we are not only cleansed from all sin, and are also transformed in a spiritual manner, made holy, children of God and heirs to heaven.

29. What do we mean by saying we are born again? It means that by Baptism we receive a new life, sanctifying grace, and supernatural life.

30. What do we mean by saying that we are regenerated? We mean that we are made new spiritual beings, better than before.

31. How does this regeneration affect us? It affects us in a spiritual manner in our soul, but not in our body.

32. What do we become by this spiritual regeneration and recreation? We are made holy and pleasing to God.

33. What also? We become children of God and heirs of heaven.

34. How is this spiritual regeneration and sanctification effected? It is effected by the grace of sanctification, which, together with the theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, are infused by the Holy Ghost into the soul in Baptism.

35. What does Holy Scripture say in regard to this? Holy Scripture says: "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us."

36. Which virtues are necessarily connected with the virtue of charity? Faith and Hope.

37. Are these three theological virtues also infused into infants by Baptism? Yes, they are.

38. What else do we receive in Baptism? We receive sacramental grace.

39. Why do we say that we are regenerated and sanctified in Christ? To signify that all these graces are given to us, because by Baptism we are united with Christ and incorporated into His Church.

All you, my pupils, who are taking part in this religious instruction, have received Baptism and Sacramental grace rejoice therein, be thankful to God for it, and try to preserve in your heart the purity you received in Baptism.

VI.—The Sacrament of Baptism (Continued).

We ask the question to-day, "When did Christ give the commandment to baptize?" He did so when He said to His apostles before His ascension: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is evident from this solemn commission, given to His apostles by our divine Saviour, that all men are required to receive Holy Baptism. Holy Scripture does not say positively when Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Baptism. According to the general supposition the institution took place when Jesus Himself was baptized by John, in the river Jordan.

Who can validly baptize? Any person in case of necessity. At all other times only priests, to whom the care of souls is given, are allowed to baptize. Baptism may be administered validly by any person if matter and form are correctly observed. Thus the love and goodness of God has provided that the Sacrament most necessary for our salvation may be within the reach of all who desire it. No one, however, can administer Baptism to himself. As before stated, Baptism may be given validly by any one when necessity requires, that is, when the child, or adult, is in danger of death and it is impossible to secure the presence of a priest. Outside of such a case Baptism should be administered only by a priest, as Our Lord appointed the priest the dispenser of His mysteries. When lay baptism is to be given a man should be chosen to give it in preference to a woman, a Christian rather than an unbeliever. The ceremonials of Baptism may be dispensed with in a baptism of necessity, but later on, when the danger of death is past, these ceremonials should be supplied. Then Baptism will be repeated conditionally with the words: "If thou art not already baptized, then I baptize thee," etc. This is done for greater security, because Baptism being so necessary a Sacrament, and in the hurry and excitement of lay Baptism, an error might have occurred.

What sort of water should be used in Baptism? Any natural water will do for the validity of Baptism. However, whenever possible, baptismal water, or water blessed for that purpose, should be used.

Natural water is river, spring, or rain water. No artificial water

can be used; for instance, no toilet waters, such as cologne or other scented or prepared waters, etc., nor can any other liquids, such as wine, milk, etc., be used in baptizing, because Christ has made water the outward sign of Baptism.

What intention must he have who baptizes? He must have the intention to administer the Sacrament of Baptism; that is, to do what the Church does, and what Christ has ordained. The intention to administer the Sacrament may be formed at the moment of baptizing, or beforehand, providing it perseveres to the time of administration of the Sacrament.

What do we promise God in Holy Baptism? We promise: 1. To believe the Catholic doctrine firmly and steadfastly. 2. To carefully avoid sin and evil occasions, and to lead a God-fearing life. In Holy Baptism we make an agreement with God, and promise to believe the Catholic doctrine firmly and steadfastly—firmly, that is, to believe all her doctrines without the slightest doubt; and steadfastly, that is, the baptized is not to allow himself to be drawn away from his faith, neither by dangers, nor death, nor promises, etc. For this reason the one baptized is asked the question: "What dost thou ask of the Church of God?" and he, or his sponsors answer, "Faith." Then the Apostles' Creed is recited with the priest. Having thus asked for faith as a precious gift, we ought to keep it carefully. Holy Scripture says: He who believes not, is already condemned. The one baptized promises, further, to avoid sin and the occasions of sin. Hence, he is asked in Holy Baptism: "Dost thou renounce Satan and all his works?" and answers: "I do renounce them." This answer he makes (if not an adult) through his sponsors. But it is not enough to avoid sin and the occasions of sin. Our faith must also bear fruit, like a good tree, in order that it may not be cut down and cast into the fire. Although the one baptized may only be an infant, still the Baptismal Vows are made for him by his sponsors and the baptized is obliged to keep these vows during his whole life. In order that our Baptismal Vows may not be forgotten, we should frequently renew them, especially when receiving our first Holy Communion, at missions, etc.

What should sponsors be particularly mindful of? Sponsors should bear in mind that they become, as it were, the spiritual parents of the baptized infant, therefore: 1. They should be good Catholics themselves. 2. They should take care that the child is instructed

in the Catholic Religion, especially if his natural parents neglect this duty, or should be prevented from performing it; and 3. They must remember they can not marry their God-child or one of his parents.

The custom of taking sponsors at Baptism comes down from the earliest times. The sponsor takes upon himself the obligation to see that the child fulfils the Baptismal Vows. In choosing sponsors parents should not be actuated by motives of ambition, but should choose sponsors capable of fulfilling the necessary duties. Each sponsor must have been baptized and have attained the age of reason. When the sponsor is not able to be present at the ceremony a so-called proxy may be substituted.

Father or mother should not baptize their own child except it be impossible to secure the help of others.

Beside Baptism of water, how else may Baptism be given? By desire or by blood.

What is Baptism of desire? An earnest wish and determination to receive Baptism in an instance where actual Baptism is not possible, or to do all that God has ordained for our salvation, accompanied with contrition and pure love of God. By Baptism of desire, for instance, the penitent thief upon the cross was saved. The desire for Baptism may be: (a) Explicit, as, for instance, in the case of a Catechumen who dies before Baptism; (b) implicit, that is, a desire to make use of the necessary means of salvation, and a determined will to do so.

The effect of the Baptism of desire is different from that of Baptism of water. As it does not give the right to the other Sacraments it does not make one a member of the Church, nor remit all temporal punishment.

What is Baptism of blood? Martyrdom for the sake of Christ. When one suffers death or receives fatal injury for the sake of Christ, and thus publicly professes his belief in Christ, he receives the Baptism of blood. With children also martyrdom takes the place of Baptism of water, as may be seen in the veneration of the Holy Innocents, who suffered martyrdom by order of King Herod.

Our Lord said: "He that shall lose his life for me, shall find it" (Matt. x. 39).

What is the state of those children who die without Baptism? They can not attain to supernatural happiness, for Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation.

Yet we may be assured that children who at their death have only the stain of original sin upon their soul, will not be punished as the lost souls who have sinned personally. It is generally supposed that these children enjoy natural happiness without the pain of loss. Nothing, however, has been revealed as to this. When, therefore, infants die before they have received Baptism, parents should console themselves with the thought that God is just and does not condemn innocent children to hell. On the other hand, there should be no delay in having the child baptized. This should be attended to at least within a week of the child's birth.

We will now explain the ceremonies of Holy Baptism in the instance of infants. Some of them precede Holy Baptism and some of them follow it.

The child to be baptized is to be taken to Church, accompanied by the sponsors. The child always receives the name of some saint in Holy Baptism, so that it may have a model for imitation, and an incentive to live a holy life. When the sponsors have given the name the child is to receive, the priest continues:

N., what dost thou ask of the Church of God?

The sponsors reply, Faith.

P. What does faith obtain for thee?

S. Life everlasting.

P. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. Faith is the foundation of Christian life, the first condition for salvation; but it must be living and prove its effects by the fulfilling of the commandments.

The priest then breathes three times upon the face of the child, and says: "Depart from (him) or (her), unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter."

As God, according to the Biblical account, breathed natural life into our first parents, so does His representative breathe upon the child to be baptized when it is to receive supernatural life. Various prayers now follow, during which the priest makes the sign of the cross upon the forehead and breast of the child, and spreads his hands over the child. Then the priest puts salt, previously blessed, into the child's mouth, saying: "Receive the salt of wisdom; let it be to thee a propitiation unto life everlasting."

Salt is the emblem of wisdom; it preserves from corruption. Now follow more prayers, then the priest lays the end of his stole upon

the child and admits him into the Church. At the Baptismal font the priest and the sponsors recite the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's prayer. Then follows another exorcism.

The frequent repetition should remind us how miserable man becomes when he is under the dominion of Satan. The priest now takes spittle from his mouth and applies it with his thumb to the ears and nostrils of the person, saying: *Ephpheta* (Be thou opened). Jesus Himself made use of this ceremony in curing the deaf mute. The ceremony should remind us of the sweet odor of virtue. The ears should be opened to the word and inspirations of God.

The priest now asks: Dost thou renounce Satan? S. I do renounce him.

P. And all his works? S. I do renounce them.

P. And all his pomps? S. I do renounce them.

Before man is admitted to the service of God he must renounce God's enemy, Satan, burst asunder every bond that still chains him in the kingdom of evil.

Then the priest anoints the child with the oil of the Catechumens upon the breast and between the shoulders, in the form of a cross, saying: "I anoint thee with the chrism of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, that you may have eternal life. Amen."

Now the priest changes his purple stole for a white one, which color is the symbol of purity and the life which Baptism imparts, and here also a symbol of the joy which replaces the color of mourning and penance.

The priest asks by name the person to be baptized: N., dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth? Sponsors. I do believe.

P. Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was born into this world, and suffered for us? S. I do believe.

P. Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting? S. I do believe.

P. N., wilt thou be baptized? S. I will.

The priest now administers Holy Baptism to the infant by taking water and pouring it thrice upon the head of the child, in the form of a cross, at the same time saying the words: N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. After baptizing, the priest anoints the child on the top of the head in the form of a cross with holy oil, whilst he repeats the words:

"May God Almighty, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has regenerated thee with water and the Holy Ghost, and given thee the pardon of all sins, anoint thee with the chrism of salvation in the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to life eternal." The priest then says: "Peace be with thee."

Hereupon the priest places a white linen cloth upon the child, saying: N., receive this white garment, and see that thou carry it without stain before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life. Amen.

Finally the priest gives a lighted candle to the person baptized (if an infant, to the sponsors), with the words: N., receive this burning light, and keep thy baptism so as to be without blame. Observe the commandments of God, that when our Lord shall come to His nuptials, thou mayest meet Him, together with all the saints, in the heavenly court, and have everlasting life, and live for ever and ever. Amen.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. When did Christ give the commandment to baptize? Before His ascension, when He said to His apostles: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19).

2. What follows from this commission of Jesus to His apostles? It follows that all men are obliged to receive Holy Baptism.

3. Do we know precisely, or does Holy Scripture mention when Jesus instituted Baptism as a Sacrament? No, we do not know; and Holy Scripture does not mention it.

4. When did this take place according to the general opinion? When Jesus caused Himself to be baptized by John, in the river Jordan.

5. Who can validly baptize? Any person in cases of necessity; ordinarily only priests are allowed to baptize.

6. What, however, is required when a lay person baptizes? He must strictly observe that which is necessary for Baptism.

7. May any one administer Baptism to himself? No; that is not allowed.

8. When may a lay person baptize? Only in cases of necessity.

9. What is meant by this? When the unbaptized person is in danger of death.

10. Why should a priest only be the dispenser of Baptism? Because Jesus gave only to His apostles the commission to baptize all men.

11. What must be observed, even in baptism of necessity, in regard to the person who gives it? A certain preference is to be observed. A man should be preferred to a woman, a Christian to an unbeliever.

12. When, after lay baptism, the danger passes, what should be done? Baptism, if at all doubtful, should be repeated in church.

13. What words does the priest use in this case? He says: If thou art not yet baptized, I baptize thee, etc.

14. Why is this done if lay baptism is valid? It is done for greater security, as in the hurry and excitement of Baptism of necessity an error might have been made by the lay person.

15. What sort of water should be used in Baptism? Any natural water, and, whenever possible, baptismal water, water blessed for that purpose, should be used.

16. Name some natural waters? Spring water, fountain, river, rain water, etc.

17. What other kind of water is there? Artificially prepared waters, such as scented or medicinal waters.

18. What can not be employed for Baptism? Milk, wine, and other liquids.

19. Why are these liquids not to be used? Because Christ instituted water as the exterior sign of Baptism.

20. What intention must he have who baptizes? He must have the intention of baptizing—that is, to do what the Church does, or what Christ has ordained.

21. What sort of vow do we make to God in Holy Baptism? A threefold vow.

22. What do we promise God first of all? We promise Him, firstly, to believe the Catholic doctrine firmly and steadfastly.

23. What question, therefore, does the priest ask the one to be baptized? What dost thou ask of the Church of God?

24. What answer is given? Faith.

25. Why does the person to be baptized ask faith? Because it is the foundation of our eternal salvation.

26. What else? Because it is necessary to live according to faith, and carefully avoid sin and the occasions of it.

27. What question, therefore, is put to the one to be baptized? Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works?

28. What is the third solemn promise we make to God? We promise God to lead a good life.

29. What must we practise if we wish to lead a good life? The works of divine and brotherly love.

30. What is necessary in order to keep these vows before our mind? Frequent renewal of them.

31. How are infants able to make such promises in Baptism? Our sponsors made them in our name.

32. What is the first duty of sponsors? They must themselves be practical Catholics.

33. If the parents neglect to look after the religious instruction necessary for their children, who must attend to this matter? The sponsors.

34. What should parents look to in choosing sponsors for their children? They ought to choose pious and Godfearing persons.

35. Can Baptism of water ever be replaced by other baptism? It may be replaced by the Baptism of desire when it is impossible to receive Baptism of water or by Baptism of blood.

36. What is Baptism of desire? An earnest wish and a determination to receive Baptism, and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.

37. Who, for instance, was saved by the Baptism of desire? The penitent thief upon the cross.

38. In what way does Baptism of desire differ from the Baptism of water? 1. The Baptism of desire does not confer the right to receive the other sacraments. 2. It does not make one a member of the Church. 3. It does not remit all temporal punishment, as Baptism of water does.

39. What is Baptism of blood? Martyrdom for the sake of Christ.

40. Whence do we know that those who receive the Baptism of blood go to heaven? Jesus said: "He that shall lose his life for me, shall find it" (Matt. x. 39).

41. What is the condition of those children who die without Baptism? They can not go to heaven.

42. Why not? Because nothing defiled can enter heaven.

43. Are they damned? No; because they have not committed any actual sin.

44. What, then, should we suppose concerning these children? That they attain to a certain natural happiness.

VII.—Confirmation.

Dear Children: To-day we are to treat of the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation. The explanation of this Sacrament calls for our special attention, because it is considered by some of minor importance, since it is not so necessary for salvation as Holy Baptism. The Fathers in speaking of this Sacrament use various terms, as: Confirmation (i. e., strengthening), Imposition of Hands, Sealing, Unction, Chrism, or Mystery of the Holy Ghost. The word "Confirmation" is derived from the Latin word "firmare," to strengthen, to make firm. Formerly this Sacrament was administered soon after Baptism, but it was always kept separate from the latter and conferred as a separate Sacrament.

"What is Confirmation?" "Confirmation is a Sacrament in which, through the imposition of the Bishop's hands, by anointing and by prayer, those already baptized are strengthened by the Holy Ghost in order that they may steadfastly profess their faith, and faithfully live up to it."

Who teaches us that Christ has instituted the Sacrament of Confirmation? The infallible Catholic Church, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, with the doctrine of the Holy Fathers, and with the practice of the earliest times.

St. Paul says (in II. Cor. i. 21, 22): "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God: who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts."

The disciples of Ephesus were baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus; and when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came down upon them, and they "spake with tongues and prophesied."

The apostles imparted the blessing of the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands. Now, this they could not do through themselves, but only by the power and command of Jesus Christ. He Himself must, therefore, have instituted the Sacrament of Holy Confirmation. St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and others of the early Fathers of the Church testify to the institution by Jesus Christ of Confirmation as a Sacrament. St. Augustine says: "The Sacrament of Chrism is just as holy as Baptism." History attests that even in the earliest days of the Church the Bishops traveled about to lay their hands on those that were baptized, and to call down the Holy Ghost upon them—just as it is done in our days. Nearly all the sects, even those which separated themselves from the Catholic Church, have accepted Confirmation as a Sacrament.

What are the effects of Confirmation? 1. Confirmation increases sanctifying grace in us. 2. It gives us the Holy Ghost to enable us to fight against evil and to grow in virtue; and 3. It imprints upon us, as soldiers of Christ, a spiritual mark which can never be effaced.

Holy Scripture says: "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts."

1. Confirmation is, as you have learned in previous lessons, a Sacrament of the living, increasing the sanctifying grace which is already present in the soul.

2. It gives us the Holy Ghost. Although the Holy Ghost dwells already in the soul through Baptism, yet in Confirmation we receive an especial communication of the Holy Ghost. "Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

The sacramental grace of the Sacraments gives strength, makes firm; hence the word "Confirmation." The holy Pope and Martyr St. Melchiades describes the effect of Confirmation compared with that of Baptism in the following manner: "In Holy Baptism the Holy Ghost gives us the fulness of grace so that we many regain our lost innocence, and in Confirmation He gives us the grace to acquire the completion of Christian justice. In Baptism we are washed and cleansed from sin; in Confirmation we are given strength to withstand the temptations of sin."

We need strength: 1. To fight against evil. 2. To grow in virtue.

Those who through Baptism have become Christians are like newborn infants—frail and weak. Through Confirmation, however, they are fortified against all the assaults of the world and of Satan. But not only are we strengthened to fight against evil, but also to grow in virtue. We see in the apostles what fortitude the Holy Ghost imparts. They had hidden themselves, fearing the Jews would put them to death; but when the Holy Ghost had descended upon them they went amongst the Jews unflinchingly and preached Christ crucified, fearing neither persecution nor death.

3. Confirmation, furthermore, imprints an ineffaceable spiritual mark. This mark (character) which Confirmation imprints—the seal—is that of a soldier of Christ, whose duty it is to combat against all visible and invisible enemies of Jesus Christ.

Who has power to confirm? The Bishops, as successors of the Apostles, have the power to confirm; in urgent cases, however, the Pope can delegate this power also to a priest who is not a Bishop. This power is, for instance, conferred by the Holy Father upon missionary priests when, on account of great distances, it would be impossible for the Bishop to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

How does the Bishop give Confirmation? He extends his hands over the candidates for Confirmation, and prays for them all in general that the Holy Ghost may come down upon them; then he lays his hand upon each one in particular and anoints him with holy Chrism; concluding by giving to all in common the Episcopal Benediction. The outward signs, therefore, of Confirmation are: the laying on of hands, the anointing, and the prayer of the Bishop. To these actual and necessary signs the Church has also added various ceremonies to symbolize the meaning and efficacy of the Sacrament. At Confirmation the Bishop lays his hand upon the candidate's head. This laying on of the hand betokens that an especial power from heaven descends upon the one confirmed. The laying of the hand upon something implies that we take possession of it. Thus the laying on of hands should remind us that we are made the property of the Church, and the property of our Saviour.

Of what does the Chrism, blessed by the Bishop, consist? Of oil of olives and balsam.

The anointing at Confirmation is done with Chrism that has

been blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday. Olive oil is obtained from the fruit of the olive tree, and in Chrism it is mixed with sweet scented balsam.

In the Old Law those that were anointed were (a) The Prophets; (b) The high priests; and (c) The Kings.

What does the oil signify? The oil signifies the strengthening of the soul for the combat against the enemies of our salvation.

Oil is a symbol of power and strength. In ancient times athletes rubbed their bodies with oil. This made their limbs strong, supple, nimble, so that their opponents could not easily lay hold of them. Confirmation should make us strong in faith and in virtue, and remind us that Satan should not be allowed to gain a hold on us through his temptations. When oil is poured on paper or other materials it penetrates them thoroughly, and can not be taken out of them. Thus should Confirmation leave on us an indelible spiritual mark.

Why is sweet-scented balsam mixed with the oil? To signify that the confirmed soul receives the grace to remain undefiled from the corruption of the world and to spread abroad by a pious life the sweet odor of virtue. Not only the sinner is an object of Divine displeasure, but also the lukewarm Christian. Our work is not by any means complete when we merely keep ourselves free from sin; we must also produce fruits of virtue. The sinner decomposes, so to speak, in the corruption of the world. Balsam protects the body from decomposition, and so should Confirmation protect the soul from the corruption of the world. As the balsam exhales sweet odors, so should our good virtues exhale the sweet odor of virtue around us. The mixing of the two substances signifies that in Confirmation we receive the fulness of Divine Grace.

Why does the Bishop make the sign of the cross upon the forehead of the person to be confirmed? To signify that a Christian should never be ashamed of the Cross, but should always confess, without hesitation, his faith in Christ Crucified.

It is said of the Saints in the Apocalypse of St. John that they bear the name of Jesus and of God the Father written upon their foreheads. Societies, clubs, etc., have as a symbol of their aims and purposes flags with signs and inscriptions. The most beautiful sign for a Christian is the sign of his redemption: the Cross; it is a sign of honor and victory at which we should always rejoice and of which we should never be ashamed.

Why does the Bishop after Confirmation give the cheek of the confirmed a gentle blow? To remind him that now it is his duty to bear with patience, for the sake of the name of Jesus, all kinds of trials and crosses.

Is Confirmation necessary for salvation? Confirmation is not absolutely necessary for salvation, yet it would be a sin not to receive it through negligence or indifference. Many synods have ordered the faithful not to neglect the Sacrament of Confirmation, and have imposed a penance on parents who neglect to have their children confirmed.

Every baptized person can receive Confirmation.

In the explanation of Holy Baptism we have learned that it forms, so to say, the portal to the edifice of our salvation, and that it imparts to us the right to receive the other Holy Sacraments. Therefore, children, even in their most tender years, may receive Confirmation. Such, indeed, was the practice in the earliest centuries of Christianity. In our own times it is usual to give Confirmation to children when they leave school and enter into public life.

How should Confirmation be received? The recipient should:

1. Be in a state of grace and pray fervently for the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

2. Promise God to live and die as a good Christian.

At the explanation of the Sacraments in general, we learned that Confirmation is a Sacrament of the living, for which reason it can only be received in the state of grace. The recipients should pray fervently for the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, so that they may receive Confirmation worthily. What these gifts of the Holy Ghost are we learned in the eighth article of the Apostles' Creed, namely: 1. Wisdom; 2. Understanding; 3. Counsel; 4. Fortitude; 5. Knowledge; 6. Godliness or Piety, and 7. The Fear of the Lord.

We should, further, promise God to live and die as good Christians. If God on His part pours upon us the fulness of His Grace, we should certainly do our best to fulfil our part by promising and endeavoring to live and die a good Catholic. A good Catholic is a person who believes all that Jesus taught and what the Catholic Church proposes to him to believe, who fulfils faithfully the Commandments of God and the Church, who loves God above all, and his neighbor as himself, who strives to avoid even the smallest sin, and to do as much good as may lie in his power. Those who have

lived a good life will also die happily, i. e., with resignation to the Divine will, and in the hope of eternal blessedness.

Why are Sponsors, or Godfathers and Godmothers, required in Confirmation? That they may present to the Bishop those who are to be confirmed, and afterward advise and help them in their spiritual combat.

The Sponsor lays his right hand on the right shoulder of the person to be confirmed. The Sponsor in Confirmation undertakes the same duties as the Sponsor in Baptism. He must himself have been confirmed, and must be of the same sex as the person to be confirmed. The Sponsor in Baptism should not also be the Sponsor in Confirmation for the same person. Amongst the early Christians, however, this was permitted when the baptized child was immediately confirmed.

The moral application is to pray frequently and earnestly that the gifts of the Holy Ghost may be strengthened in you. Perform the duties of a Catholic without fear of men, for Jesus has said: "Whoso loses his life for my sake shall find it."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

2. What other names have the Fathers given to this Sacrament? The names: Seal of the Lord, Laying on of hands, Mystery of anointing, Sacrament of Chrism, Token of salvation, Marking of the forehead, etc.

3. Whence comes the word Confirmation? From the Latin word "firmare," i. e., to fortify.

4. When was Confirmation given in the early centuries? Immediately after Baptism.

5. Is it a separate Sacrament? It has always been regarded as a separate Sacrament.

6. What does the Council of Trent say of the Sacrament of Confirmation? It declares that Confirmation is not merely a ceremony, but a true and actual Sacrament.

7. What is Confirmation? (Answer as in Catechism.)

8. Why is Confirmation a Sacrament? Because in Confirmation there is present everything which belongs to a Sacrament.

9. What is that? 1. An outward sign. 2. An invisible grace. 3. The institution by Jesus Christ our Lord.

10. Who teaches us that Christ instituted the Sacrament of Confirmation? The infallible Catholic Church, in accordance with Holy Scriptures and with the doctrine of the Fathers.

11. When, at what time, did Jesus institute Confirmation? Holy Scripture does not tell us definitely when this Sacrament was instituted by Christ.

12. What text of Scripture alludes to the anointing and the effects of Confirmation? St. Paul writes: "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts" (II. Cor. i. 2, 22).

13. What does Holy Scripture say of the Disciples of Ephesus? "They (the disciples of Ephesus) were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied" (Acts xix. 5, 6).

14. Now if the Apostles actually imparted the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands, what follows therefrom? That they had been directed and empowered to do so by Jesus.

15. What Fathers speak of Confirmation? Irenaeus, Tertullian, Augustine.

16. What does St. Augustine write concerning the Sacrament of Confirmation? "The Sacrament of Chrism," says St. Augustine, "is just as holy as Baptism."

17. What does Church history record concerning the administering of Confirmation? It tells us that the Bishops traveled long distances to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

18. What have even those sects which have fallen away from the Church accepted concerning Confirmation? That Confirmation is a Sacrament.

19. What are the effects of Confirmation? (Answer as in Catechism.)

20. What accordingly is the first effect? Confirmation increases sanctifying grace.

21. Why does it *increase* sanctifying grace? Because it is a Sacrament of the living.

22. What does man become by Baptism? He is made a child of God.

23. And what does he become through the Sacrament of Confirmation? A soldier of Christ.

24. What is the second effect of Confirmation? It imparts to us the Holy Ghost.

25. But the Holy Ghost was already imparted to us in Baptism? In Confirmation the Holy Ghost is imparted to us in a particular manner.

26. Whence do we know that the Holy Ghost is imparted to us in Confirmation? From the text of Scripture: "They laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

27. For what does Confirmation give the recipient strength? For the combat against evil, and for growth in good.

28. Why do the aspirants for Confirmation require to be strengthened? Because they are still feeble and weak.

29. In whom do we see exemplified the efficacy of the grace of the Holy Ghost? In the apostles.

30. What was their condition before the descent of the Holy Ghost? They were filled with fear of the Jews.

31. How were they after the coming of the Holy Ghost? They were fearless; so much so, that they preached Jesus crucified in the very face of His enemies.

32. What is the third effect of Confirmation? It imprints on us, as soldiers of Christ, a spiritual mark which can never be effaced.

33. Against whom, then, must we fight? Against the visible and invisible enemies of Jesus Christ.

34. Who have the power to confirm? The Bishops, as the successors of the apostles, have the power to confirm.

35. Who may give Confirmation in urgent cases? In urgent cases priests, empowered by the Pope, may give Confirmation.

36. What priests in particular receive this power? Missionary priests.

37. Why is this? Because they go to far countries where there may be no Bishop to confirm.

38. How does the Bishop give Confirmation? (Answer as in Catechism.)

39. Which are the essential outward signs of Confirmation? 1. The imposition of hands; 2. The anointing with Chrism, and, 3. The prayer of the Bishop.

40. How does the Bishop lay his hands upon the candidate for Confirmation? By a movement of the hands from above.

41. What does this denote? That every grace comes from above, from heaven, and descends upon us.

42. When a person lays his hand upon anything what is indicated? That he has taken possession of it.

43. What is signified, then, when hands are laid upon us in Confirmation? That we have become the property of God and of the Church.

44. Of what does the Chrism blessed by the Bishop consist? Of oil of olives and balsam.

45. What does the oil signify? The oil signifies the inward strength for the combat against the enemies of our salvation.

46. What was the custom of the gladiators in ancient times before entering the arena to fight? To rub their bodies with oil.

47. What effect did this have? The limbs were strengthened, made supple, and lithesome, so that their enemies could not easily catch them.

48. When oil soaks into paper can the stain be removed? No; that is impossible.

49. In the same way Confirmation imprints upon the one who receives it an ineffaceable spiritual mark.

50. What ought man to do so as not to become an object of Divine displeasure? He should, by good works, spread abroad the fragrance of virtue.

51. What part of the body is anointed? The forehead.

52. With what sign? With the sign of the holy cross.

53. By what sign were we made children of God in Baptism? The sign of the cross.

54. Why is this? Because Jesus died for us upon the cross, and by His death obtained for us the grace of God.

55. Why are we anointed upon the forehead? To indicate that the Christian should never be ashamed of the cross, but should profess fearlessly his belief in Jesus crucified.

56. What sort of sign was the cross before the death of Christ? It was a sign of the greatest ignominy.

57. What sort of sign is it now? It is a sign of honor and victory.

58. Why does the Bishop, after he has anointed the person, give him a slight blow on the cheek? To remind him that now being strengthened, he ought to be prepared to suffer patiently any kind of humiliation for the name of Jesus.

59. Who is capable of receiving Confirmation? Every one who is baptized.

60. How ought we to receive Confirmation? (Answer as in Catechism.)

61. Why must we be in a state of grace to receive Confirmation? Because it is one of the Sacraments of the living.

62. What else should we do before receiving Confirmation? We should pray fervently for the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

63. Name these seven gifts. (Answer as in Catechism.)
64. What promise ought those confirmed make to God? They should promise God to live and to die as good Christians.

God does everything for man's happiness. He infuses the Holy Ghost into the hearts of men. It is for men, therefore, to open their hearts to the Holy Spirit, to admit Him and to preserve Him in their hearts.

VIII.—The Holy Eucharist.

The Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

Dear Children: The last instruction treated of the holy Sacrament of Confirmation, and to-day, in the order of the Catechism, we come to the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. It is also called the Most Blessed Sacrament, because while in the other Sacraments God's *grace* is imparted to us, in the Holy Eucharist we receive the Author and Dispenser of all graces, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The doctrine of the Holy Eucharist is divided into three parts:

1. The Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.
2. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and
3. Holy Communion.

The first part, which we shall now consider, treats of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

The Catechism asks: "What is the Holy Eucharist?" It is the true Body and the true Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is really and substantially present under the appearance of bread and wine, for the nourishment of our souls.

In the order of Sacraments, the Holy Eucharist is the third. Baptism, as you have already learned, is the first and most necessary Sacrament. Confirmation, formerly given immediately after Baptism, is mentioned second, and the Holy Eucharist third. In holy Baptism we receive supernatural life, in Confirmation strength, and in the Holy Eucharist the nourishment of our souls.

The bread and wine, therefore, do not merely represent Jesus Christ, they do not merely *indicate* Him, they are not merely

a *semblance,* but they are the true Body and the true Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is really Himself, there is no deception; He is present in His Divinity and His Humanity, with all His Divine attributes, in His entire perfection. He is the same Jesus that as an infant was born in the stable at Bethlehem, worshipped by the shepherds, and presented by Mary in the Temple at Jerusalem; He is the same Jesus who for thirty-three years lived upon earth, worked miracles, suffered and died for us upon the cross, who was laid in the grave, rose again, gloriously ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. It is not only the highest grace, the abundance of all graces, but it is the Son of God Himself, as God and man, with body and soul, with flesh and blood. And though Christ is present in millions of parts of the world, in millions of consecrated Hosts upon our altars, it is the same true Jesus Christ who, through the miracle of transubstantiation, is present on every altar under the appearances of bread and wine. Various names are given to the Holy Eucharist, such as:

1. Blessed, or Most Holy, Sacrament, because it contains Jesus Christ Himself, the Author of all Sacraments, and of all sanctity.

2. The Sacrament of the Altar, because it is on the altar that the miracle of transubstantiation takes place; on the altar that Christ dwells in our tabernacles.

3. Sacred Host (sacrifice), because it is the perpetual sacrifice for the sins of the world.

4. Eucharist, i. e., sacred remembrance. Jesus instituted this Sacrament at the Last Supper as a perpetual remembrance.

5. The true Paschal lamb, because the Jewish Paschal lamb was only a figure of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus is the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world.

6. Manna, truly heavenly bread, which came down from heaven upon the earth. The manna in the desert was a prototype of the true celestial bread of the New Testament.

7. Bread of Angels, because in receiving it we ought to be as free from sin as the angels.

8. Corpus Christi, or Body of Christ.

9. Holy Communion, because Jesus instituted it to be the food of our souls, to unite us most intimately with Himself.

Is there in the Holy Eucharist all that is requisite for constituting a Sacrament? Yes; 1. The outward sign, i. e., the appear-

ances of bread and wine; 2. The invisible grace—Jesus Christ Himself, the Author and Dispenser of all graces; and, 3. The institution by our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Eucharist has from all ages been called and reverenced as a Sacrament. 1. The forms of bread and wine. Bread and wine are the outward sign of the Sacrament. We say the forms, because of the substance of bread and wine, nothing remains. The appearances, however, are the outward, material, perceptible signs. 2. There is present an invisible grace, Jesus Christ Himself indeed, the abundance of all graces. The outward signs, the forms of bread and wine indicate nourishment and strengthening of our souls. And for this, the nourishing and strengthening of our souls is Jesus ever present in this Sacrament. 3. The Holy Eucharist was instituted by Jesus Christ Himself for all time. As, with the priestly power, He also gave the command to celebrate this mystery continually as He Himself had done: "Do this for a commemoration of me." The first Christians continued the breaking of bread in the community according to the command of Christ, and we to-day do the same.

When did Jesus Christ institute this Sacrament? He instituted it at the Last Supper, the evening before His bitter Passion. He was about to make the great sacrifice for the redemption of the world, therefore He wished to give the greatest proof of His love, and as His Testament to leave Himself as God and man until the end of the world.

How did He institute it? Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke and gave it to His Disciples, saying: "Take ye, and eat: this is my Body." After that, in like manner, He took the chalice with wine in it, blessed and gave it to His Disciples, saying: "Drink ye all of this: this is my Blood. Do this for a commemoration of me."

What became of the bread and wine when Jesus pronounced these words over them: "This is my Body, this is my Blood?" The bread was transformed into the true Body, and the wine became the true Blood of Jesus Christ. To transform means to make out of one substance another entirely different. For instance, at the marriage in Cana, Jesus, by His omnipotence, transformed the water into wine. The Church calls this transformation of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, Transubstantiation. The substance of bread and wine at the words of consecration has ceased to exist.

After the words which Christ spoke over the bread and wine,

what still remained of bread and wine? Nothing but the species or appearances. The same takes place at the consecration of the Mass; at the words of the priest the appearances of bread and wine remain, but without the substance of bread and wine. It must not be so understood as if Christ was present in the bread at the same time as the substance of the bread; no, the bread has actually ceased to be bread, and the wine has actually ceased to be wine. Christ is there under the *appearances* of bread and wine. When, therefore, the Holy Eucharist is called "Bread," or the "Consecrated Bread," it is referred to as the nourishment of our soul.

What is understood by the appearances of bread and wine? All that which the senses perceive of bread and wine; as form, color, taste, smell, etc.

According to the testimony of our senses, the Holy Eucharist appears to be just what it was before the consecration, namely, bread and wine; it looks, tastes, and smells the same as before; it produces the same effects upon our senses as real bread would produce. These are, then, the appearances or forms of bread and wine.

How do we know that Christ with the words: "This is my Body, this is my Blood," gave to the Apostles His true Body and His true Blood? We know it:

1. Because Christ promised His Disciples that He would give them His real flesh to eat and His real blood to drink, and because He then at the Last Supper expressly declared that what He gave them as food and drink was really His Body and His Blood.

2. Because the Apostles and the Catholic Church believed and taught this doctrine from the beginning of the Church. The institution of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar was therefore a fulfilment of a preceding promise. Christ once fed in the desert, in a miraculous manner, five thousand people with a few loaves of bread and fishes. When, on the following day, the people came to Him, Jesus used the opportunity to talk to them of the still more wonderful food of the soul. "I am the Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh from heaven, that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John vi. 48-52). As the Jews took these words in their literal sense, they said: "How

can he give us his flesh to eat?" And Jesus said unto them: "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you, for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed" (John vi. 53, 54, 56).

In this promise the Saviour expresses unequivocally that He gives us in truth His Flesh and His Blood, that He Himself is present wholly and substantially in the Blessed Sacrament, for He says plainly: "He who eateth *me,*" etc., and "Whoso eateth *my flesh* and drinketh *my blood,* abideth in me, and I in him; the same shall live by me." It is a mystery which we can not grasp with our weak understanding, but which we must accept humbly. The words of institution of the Holy Eucharist strengthen our belief. "This is my Body! This is my Blood." Could Jesus have expressed Himself clearer and more distinctly? He who would give another sense to these words would make Jesus act untruthfully.

3. The Apostles and the Catholic Church have always believed and taught this. Thus do the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as well as the Apostle Paul (the latter in his first letter to the Corinthians), relate the institution of the Holy Eucharist in perfect conformity. St. Paul the Apostle says distinctly: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord." The constant belief of the Catholic Church shines forth through her ceremonies of Divine worship. In the earliest days of Christianity the Holy Eucharist was reserved with the greatest care in order that it might not be desecrated. In consequence of the belief in the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, the Church commands that every one (with the exception of the sick) must receive Holy Communion fasting from the previous midnight. The most ancient liturgies express this belief.

Several councils (that of Nice and the Lateran) declare most distinctly the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and that of Trent threatens with excommunication those who teach otherwise. Finally the Fathers and the Church historians of all the centuries show belief in the presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Thus St. Ignatius, a disciple of the Apostles and a

martyr, says that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins. In the same way St. Justin the martyr, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem. "The bread and the wine which, before the invoking of the Most Adorable Trinity, was none other than bread and wine, are after this invocation the Body and Blood of Christ." St. Ambrose: "This food which thou receiveth, this living Bread that came down from heaven, preserves unto the nourishment of eternal life, and whoso eats of it will not die eternally, for this is the Body of Christ." St. Augustine: "The Body of the Lord enters the Christian's mouth. He who partakes unworthily, receives certainly the Lord's Body, but to his perdition."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Holy Eucharist.

2. Why do we call this Sacrament the Most Holy? Because in this Sacrament is contained Christ, our Lord, himself, the source of all heavenly gifts.

3. Into how many parts is the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist divided? It is divided into three parts.

4. Of what do they treat? The first part treats of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist; the second of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and the third of Holy Communion.

5. Of what does the first part treat? It treats of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

6. What is the Holy Eucharist? It is the real Body and the real Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. (as in Catechism).

7. Do the appearances of bread and wine merely represent the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ? No; the Body and Blood of our Lord are really there.

8. How is Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist? He is present really and substantially, wholly and undivided.

9. What means Jesus is substantially present? It means: Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist as God and Man, with soul and body, with flesh and blood.

10. To what end is Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist? For the nourishment of our souls.

11. Mention one of the names which have been given to the Holy Eucharist? It is called the Most Holy.

12. Why is it so called? Because it contains God Himself, who is Most Holy.

13. Why is it called Sacrament of the Altar? Because the Sacred Host is consecrated and reserved upon the Altar.

14. Why is it called Sacred Host (Victim)? Because it is the perpetual victim or sacrifice for the sins of the world.

15. Why is it called Eucharist? Because Jesus instituted it as a perpetual remembrance of Him.

16. For what reason is it called the true Paschal lamb? Because the Jewish Paschal lamb was only a figure of the Holy Eucharist, and because Jesus took away the sins of the entire world as the lamb of the New Law.

17. Why is the Holy Eucharist called Manna? Because it contains Jesus, who, like the Manna of the Old Testament, came down from heaven upon the earth.

18. Why is the Holy Eucharist called the Bread of Angels? Because in receiving it we ought to be as free from sin as the angels.

19. Why is it called Corpus Christi? Because it is the true Body and the true Blood of our Lord and Saviour.

20. Why is it called Holy Communion? Because Jesus instituted it as the food of our souls to unite us with Him.

21. Is there in the Holy Eucharist all that is requisite for constituting a Sacrament? Yes: 1. The visible sign in the appearances of bread and wine. 2. The invisible grace, i. e., Jesus Christ Himself, the Author and Dispenser of all graces; and 3. The institution by our Lord Jesus Christ.

22. What are the outward signs of the Holy Eucharist? The appearances of bread and wine.

23. What is the invisible grace? Jesus Christ Himself, the Author and Dispenser of all graces and all the special graces He confers.

24. What are the words of institution of the Holy Eucharist? "Do this for a commemoration of me."

25. How long will Jesus be present in the Blessed Sacrament? Until the end of the world.

26. Did Christ give to His Apostles the power to transform bread and wine into His Sacred Flesh and Blood? Yes; He gave them that power with these words: "Do this for a commemoration of me."

27. Upon what occasion did Jesus institute the Holy Eucharist? At the Last Supper, the evening before His bitter Passion.

28. Why did the Israelites celebrate the festival of the Pasch? They celebrated it in remembrance of their delivery from the captivity of Egypt.

29. What were they obliged to do upon this festival? In every family the Paschal lamb had to be eaten.

30. With whom did Jesus eat the Paschal lamb? With His Disciples.

31. What act of humility did Jesus practise upon this occasion? He washed the feet of His Disciples.

32. And what did He do afterward? He instituted the Holy Eucharist.

33. How did He institute it? He took bread into His sacred hands, blessed and broke it, and gave it to His Disciples with the words: "Take ye, and eat: this is my Body." After that, in like manner, He took the chalice with wine in it, blessed and gave it to His Disciples, saying: "Drink ye all of this; this is my Blood. Do this for a commemoration of me."

34. What took place that same evening in the Garden of Olives? The Passion of Jesus began.

35. What happened on the next day? Jesus was crucified upon Mount Calvary.

36. As what then may we consider the institution of the Holy Eucharist? As a last will or testament of our Divine Saviour's life on earth.

37. What became of the bread and wine, when Jesus pronounced these words over them: "This is my Body! This is my Blood"? The bread was transformed into the true Body, and the wine into the true Blood of Jesus Christ.

38. What means Transubstantiation? It means to transform one substance into another.

39. What is present before transubstantiation? There is present bread and wine.

40. Is bread and wine present after transubstantiation? No; there is present neither bread nor wine.

41. What then is present? The true Body and the true Blood of Jesus Christ.

42. What is still present of the bread and wine? The appearance only.

43. Is the Holy Eucharist, however, sometimes called Bread? Yes; meaning consecrated Bread, Bread of the Soul.

44. What is understood by the appearances of bread and wine? All that which the senses perceive of bread and wine; as form, color, taste, smell, etc.

45. What effect does the consecrated Bread and Wine produce upon our senses? It produces the same effect upon our senses as if bread and wine were really present.

46. What, therefore, takes place during transubstantiation? A miracle takes place.

47. Is our weak human understanding capable of comprehending a miracle? No; it can not comprehend it.

48. Now, since man can not understand, what must he do? He must believe with childlike humility.

49. Are there other incidents in our holy religion which we can not understand? Yes, for instance, the Resurrection, Jesus passing through closed doors, etc.

50. What do we perceive in Jesus instituting the Holy Eucharist under the forms of bread and wine? We perceive therein the great love of Jesus for mankind.

51. Why love? Because we are thereby enabled to receive Jesus within us.

52. How do ye know that Jesus gave to the Apostles His true Body and true Blood with the words: "This is my Body! This is my Blood!"? (Answer as in Catechism.)

53. What is the first proof? Jesus had already promised His Disciples beforehand that He would give them His flesh to eat.

54. What did the Jews do, understanding these words in a literal sense? They said: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

55. What did Jesus unite with His promise? He united with His promise an assurance and a threat.

56. What do these say? "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you," etc.

57. What is the second proof? The Apostles and the Catholic Church have always believed and taught this doctrine.

58. Which of the Apostles expresses himself clearly on this point, that the Holy Eucharist contains the true Body and the true Blood of Jesus Christ? The Apostle St. Paul.

59. What does he say? "He who eateth this Bread or drinketh this chalice unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

60. Mention some of the Fathers who declared themselves concerning the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist? St. Ignatius, St. Justin the Martyr, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine.

61. What do they all declare concerning it? That in the appearances of bread and wine are contained the true Body and the true Blood of Jesus Christ.

IX.—The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

(*Continued.*)

In the explanation of the Catechism we came in our last instruction to the question: Did Christ give to His apostles power to change bread and wine into His sacred flesh and blood?

Yes; He gave them that power with these words: "Do this for a commemoration of me." At the Last Supper the Saviour instituted the Blessed Sacrament in which He willed to remain with His people until the end of the world. For not only did He promise to His apostles and disciples, but He promised to all men that He would give them His flesh and blood. He had, therefore, to make provision for the continuance of this work of His omnipotence and love. For this reason He conferred the power upon His apostles "to do *this*," i. e., to do the same as He Himself had just done, namely, to change the bread and wine into His sacred flesh and blood. Now, when Jesus gives a command to do something which is a work of divine power, it is certain that He also grants the necessary divine power. Jesus spoke here only to the apostles, who are called, therefore, the dispensers of God's mysteries. He conferred the priestly authority upon the apostles as the priests and bishops of the Church. They were, as priests, to prepare and offer up the sacred mystery in commemoration of Him, in remembrance of His Passion and death. The faithful did not receive this power, but they could take part in the sacrifice and *receive* the Holy Eucharist in memory of the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. To whom did this power pass from the apostles?

It passed from the apostles to the bishops and priests. A bishop, a priest, or even a deacon can distribute Holy Communion. During the time of persecution even laymen were allowed to reserve the Holy Eucharist and to administer it to themselves. But the act of transubstantiation, or the consecration of the Holy Eucharist, is for priests only. The power which Christ granted directly to His apostles was to continue in His Church. The bishops and priests are the successors of the apostles. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders power is conferred upon priests to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. No one else can ever have this power.

How do bishops and priests exercise this power? They exercise it at Mass, by pronouncing over the bread and wine the words: "This is my body, this is my blood."

The priest at the altar represents Jesus Christ; he speaks and acts in His name; hence he says also: "This is my body, this is my blood," not: "This is the body of Jesus Christ, this is the blood of Jesus Christ." Christ is the one priest of the New Law. He changes the substance of the bread and wine as at the Last Supper. The priest speaks in the person of Jesus Christ, and the words of Christ work the change. At the moment, therefore, when the words are uttered: "This is my body," the bread is changed into the body of the Lord, and by the words: "This is my blood," the wine is changed into the blood of Christ. This change takes place during the ceremony of Holy Mass. For the validity of the consecration the words: "This is my body, this is my blood," would suffice. It is proper, however, that the sacred act should take place with becoming reverence, and with corresponding prayers and ceremonies. For this reason, from the earliest times, the holy mysteries were celebrated with special prayers and connected and surrounded with special ceremonies. The established order is that only at Holy Mass it is permitted to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Is there, then, after the consecration, no longer bread and wine on the altar? No; there is then on the altar the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine. As a true and real change of the bread and wine takes place, so after the consecration the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ are present upon the altar, under the appearances of bread and wine. Christ Himself is wholly and substantially present in His divinity and His humanity.

How long does Christ remain present under the appearances of consecrated bread and wine? As long as these appearances continue to exist.

Christ has united His presence to the outward signs of the appearances of bread and wine; He is therefore present after the consecration as long as the appearances of bread and wine are present.

Whether, therefore, the Holy Eucharist is upon the altar during or after Holy Mass, or reserved in the tabernacle, or taken to the dying or sick, or carried in solemn procession, Christ is always present as long as the appearances of bread and wine are present.

Is only the body of Christ present under the appearance of bread, and only the blood of Christ present under the appearance of wine? No; under the appearance of each of these substances Christ is present entire and undivided, as He is entire and undivided in heaven.

The Catechism says clearly and distinctly that under the appearance of bread not only is the sacred body contained, and under the appearance of wine not only the sacred blood, but that in each species Christ is present entire and undivided. It is indeed the body of the Lord which is signified by the words of consecration: "This is my body!" and is present under the appearance of bread. But it is the true and glorified body of the Lord as He is enthroned at the right hand of His Father in heaven. This glorified body is no longer capable of suffering, it is living and glorified, and consequently united to His blood, and Jesus Christ is truly and substantially present under the appearances of bread. So, too, after the consecration of the chalice, not only the blood, but also the body of Jesus Christ is present. Whoever, therefore, receives the Holy Eucharist only under one form (be it under the form of bread or under the form of wine), has received, entire and undivided, really and substantially, the body of Christ.

When the priest breaks or divides the Sacred Host, does he also break the body of Christ? No; he breaks or divides the appearances only: the body of Christ itself is present in each part entire and living, in a true though mysterious manner.

The form of bread, therefore, may be large or small, the Sacred Host may be broken or divided into three, five, ten, one hundred, or more parts, it makes no difference. In every drop of the consecrated wine Jesus Christ is present entire and undivided. Following the example of Christ, in the early times the priest consecrated only one large loaf of bread, and this was then broken and divided among the faithful. When, therefore, the priest breaks the Sacred Host, he only breaks or divides the appearances, and the glorified body of Jesus is present in any and every part entire and undivided.

The omnipotent Saviour, who walked upon the waters and passed through closed doors, who of His own power rose from the grave and ascended into heaven, is not subject to laws of nature, which He made and which He can revoke when He sees fit.

What does the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist require of us? We are bound to visit Him frequently, and to adore

Him with profound humility and awe, and with ardent love and gratitude.

The inexpressible love of Our Lord and Saviour for mankind moved Him to institute the Holy Eucharist. He willed to remain with us until the end of the world. The same love that called man into existence, and saved him from rejection after his fall, this same divine love it was that impelled Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to institute this Holy Sacrament. He wished to be with us and to remain with us, as our Saviour, as Teacher, Physician, Friend, and as our Deliverer in all the perils of our body and soul.

For so great a love we can not sufficiently praise and glorify Jesus. Hence we should endeavor to remain always united to Him, to visit Him frequently, and to worship Him most humbly.

At the consecration, first the body, and then the blood of Jesus are raised and shown to the faithful for adoration. A ring of the bell announces the approach of the supreme moment in which Jesus descends from heaven in an invisible manner and takes up His abode with His divinity and His humanity under the forms of bread and wine.

The faithful fall upon their knees, the organ is silenced, in the house of God reigns a holy, adoring silence.

When the Holy Eucharist is carried to the sick, all present in the sick room fall on their knees to adore their Saviour.

The presence of Christ requires of us that we should visit Him often. If we think it our duty to visit friends, relations, the sick and dying, why should we not also visit frequently Our Lord and Saviour, who has done so much for us? We find in Him everything that we stand in need of: Counsel, comfort, assistance, fortitude. By our visits to the Blessed Sacrament our love for Jesus will ever increase and we shall become better for it. As often as we visit the Blessed Sacrament, and as often as we assist at Holy Mass, we should make a spiritual communion, i. e., we should have the fervent desire of receiving the Holy Eucharist.

We should show our reverence for the Blessed Sacrament by taking part in the sacramental processions which may take place in our churches, for instance, on the Feast of Corpus Christi. This festival was introduced in the middle of the thirteenth century, and was confirmed for the entire Catholic Church by the Council of Vienna in 1311. It is intended as a solemn festival of thanksgiving for the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, a day of rejoicing and

happiness. The Council of Trent calls the Feast of Corpus Christi a triumph of truth, victorious over unbelief and heresy.

Upon certain solemn occasions the Church exposes the Blessed Sacrament for the adoration of the faithful; as, for instance, during Forty Hours' Devotion, on the first Friday of the month, etc.

Is Christ present in the Holy Eucharist only that He may be with us in His divine and human nature? He is present there for two other reasons:

1. That He may offer Himself for us in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and 2. That in Holy Communion He may give Himself to us for the nourishment of our souls.

Hence the Council of Trent says: "Christ has in this sacrament poured out for mankind all the treasures of His love. It was not enough that in it He should dwell among us, and be the food of our souls upon our earthly pilgrimage, He wished to be there for the glory of His heavenly Father, the perpetual Sacrifice of Holy Mass in the New Law." It remains, therefore, for us to consider now the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and then Holy Communion, which we shall do in our following instructions.

What is the application of to-day's lesson? Be devout and pious in church, where Jesus Christ vouchsafes to dwell; go there often, worship Him, implore His grace, and be careful to avoid even the shadow of disrespect.

Jesus has said: "Come to me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matt. xi. 28). How consoling is this invitation! Jesus opens His arms to receive us and to press us to His loving heart, thus opening heaven to us even in this life. Blessed are those who accept this invitation!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the power given by Christ to His apostles to change bread and wine into His sacred flesh and blood.

2. Did Christ give this power to His apostles? Yes; He did so when He said to them: "Do this for a commemoration of me."

3. How long did Jesus wish to remain with us in this sacrament? Until the end of the world.

4. To whom did Jesus promise His body as food, and His blood as drink, to His apostles and His disciples, or to all mankind? To all mankind.

5. Now if all mankind was to receive Christ's body and blood, what power must necessarily be given to His apostles and disciples? The power of doing the same as He had done at the Last Supper, viz., of changing bread and wine into His body and blood.

6. To whom did Jesus say, "Do this in commemoration of me"—to His apostles or to all mankind? He said it to His apostles.

7. What are the apostles called? They are called the dispensers of His mysteries.

8. What power did Jesus therefore confer upon His apostles? The priestly or sacerdotal power.

9. To whom did this power pass from the apostles? It passed from the apostles to their successors, the bishops and priests.

10. Who can dispense the Holy Eucharist? The bishops, the priests, and also the deacons.

11. What custom existed at the time of persecution? The faithful could administer the Holy Eucharist to themselves.

12. Who alone can consecrate the Holy Eucharist? Only those who have been ordained priests.

13. By which sacrament do priests receive the power to consecrate? By the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

14. Why was this power to pass from the apostles to the bishops and priests? Because Jesus desired that His means of grace, the holy sacraments, should exist until the end of the world.

15. Whose place does the priest take at Holy Mass? He takes the place of Jesus Christ.

16. In whose name does he speak and act? He speaks and acts in the name of Jesus.

17. What does the priest say at the consecration? He says: "This is my body! This is the chalice of my blood!"

18. What does the priest *not* say at the consecration? He does not say: "This is the body of Jesus! This is the blood of Jesus!"

19. Who, then, performs the change, the priest or Jesus? Jesus performs the change.

20. What is present upon the altar after the words of consecration? The true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ.

21. When does this change take place? In the Holy Mass.

22. At what moment? At the consecration.

23. What is done when the consecration takes place? The Sacred Host and the chalice with the precious blood are elevated for the adoration of the faithful.

24. When only may the priest consecrate? Only during Holy Mass.

25. Is there, then, after the consecration bread and wine on the altar? No; there is then on the altar the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

26. May we entertain any doubts concerning this? No; we can not doubt.

27. What has taken the place of the bread and wine? The true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ.

28. Under what forms? Under the forms of bread and wine.

29. How does this change take place? In an invisible manner by the power of God.

30. Can we, with our feeble human understanding, comprehend how this happens? No; we can not comprehend it.

31. What is it? It is a mystery to us.

32. How is this wonderful change possible? Through God's omnipotence.

33. How long does Christ remain present with His sacred flesh and blood? As long as the appearances of bread and of wine continue to exist.

34. Under what forms does Jesus exist in the Holy Eucharist? The forms of bread and wine.

35. Is only the body of Christ present under the appearance of bread, and only the blood of Christ under the appearance of wine? No; under each appearance Christ is present entire and undivided, as He is entire and undivided in heaven.

36. When we speak of a body, what do we understand by the word? Everything that belongs to the body.

37. He who partakes of the Sacred Host, then, receives what? He receives the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ.

38. Why does the Catholic Church set such great value upon this belief? Because the faithful receive Holy Communion under the form of bread only.

39. When, then, a person receives Holy Communion only under one form, be it under the form of bread alone or under the form of wine alone, what does he receive? He receives the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ whole and entire.

40. When the priest breaks or divides the Sacred Host (either at his Communion or in case of necessity), does he also break the body of Christ? No; he breaks or divides the appearances only: the body of Christ itself is present in each part whole and entire.

41. When may it become necessary to break or divide the small consecrated Hosts? When the quantity of Sacred Hosts is not sufficient for the number of the faithful, or when a sick person is unable to swallow the whole Sacred Host.

42. If, then, a consecrated Host should be broken into two, three, five, ten, one hundred or more parts, what is in each part and in the smallest particle? In each and every part, even the smallest, is present the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ.

43. What is present in every drop of the consecrated blood? The true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ.

44. What does the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist require of us? That we visit Him frequently, etc. (as in Catechism).

45. Where does Jesus Christ dwell? Jesus Christ dwells in the house of God, the church.

46. What outward sign in the church reminds every visitor of the real presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist? The sanctuary lamp, which burns always before the altar as long as the Blessed Sacrament is there reserved.

47. What festival was established in honor of the Blessed Sacrament? That of Corpus Christi.

48. Is Christ present in the Holy Eucharist merely for the sake of dwelling with us? He is also present for two other reasons: 1. That He may offer Himself for us in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and, 2. That in Holy Communion He may give Himself to us for the nourishment of our souls.

X.—The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

We heard in the last instruction that the changing of the bread and wine into the true body and true blood of Jesus Christ takes place during Holy Mass.

We come, therefore, to-day to the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

What is a sacrifice? A sacrifice in a religious sense is a visible gift, offered to God, to glorify and to worship Him as the Supreme Lord. In a general sense, "to sacrifice" means to give up something valuable. There may be in this sense interior and exterior, visible and invisible, sacrifices. In another sense, however, we understand by a sacrifice an outward, visible gift, withdrawn from ordinary use, to be consecrated to God. To the proper and complete idea of a sacrifice pertain the following four points:

1. A visible gift, for "every priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifice."

2. A priest who sacrifices, and who is appointed to do this. "No one can take this dignity upon himself except the one who is called thereunto by God, as Aaron."

3. The offering of the gift to God alone, to honor and worship Him as the Supreme Lord.

4. The sacrificial gift must in some manner be broken or destroyed as a token of our complete dependence upon God, the Lord over life and death. Have there been sacrifices at all times? Yes; there have been. Under the Old Law they were strictly commanded by God Himself.

It is natural for man to make known by outward signs the love and reverence he bears for some one. Children deprive themselves of many things in order to give their parents presents. Man offers sacrifice to the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth to manifest his love and adoration for Him by exterior, visible signs. All nations of the earth offer sacrifice. The sons of our first parents, Cain and Abel, offered a sacrifice to God—Cain sacrificed the fruits of his fields, Abel the firstlings of his flock. Noe sacrificed animals, so did Abraham; Melchisedech, the high priest, offered bread and wine. The heathens sacrifice animals and even human beings to their imagined gods. In the time of the Patriarchs, they them-

selves were the sacrificial priests. It was in the time of Moses that a special tribe (Levi) was set apart for sacrificial service, and it was definitely appointed what, how, when, and by whom the sacrifice should be offered.

The sacrifice of the Old Law was partly bloody, partly unbloody.

(a) The bloody sacrifices were: 1. The burnt offering. This was an animal offered up daily, night and morning; hence it was called the perpetual sacrifice. The blood of the victim was poured about the altar; the body of the animal, however, was burned. This was a sacrifice of adoration and praise, which expressed God's dominion over life and death, and absolute surrender to God on the part of man. Three-year-old oxen, lambs a year old, and young pigeons were offered for this sacrifice.

2. Peace offerings, which according to the intention were sacrifices of thanksgiving or of petition. At these only a part of the victim was burned, the rest served for the sacrificial meal of the priests and the one who made the offering.

3. Expiatory sacrifices for the atonement of sins, at which the altar also was sprinkled with blood. A special sacrifice of expiation took place on the great Feast of Atonement. Two he-goats were brought in, one was slaughtered, and its blood sprinkled on the Ark of the Covenant, the other was driven into the wilderness.

(b) The unbloody sacrifices were either offerings of food, drink, or incense.

Why were the sacrifices of the Old Law abolished? Because they were only figures of the immaculate sacrifice of the New Law, and were, therefore, not to last longer than the Old Law itself.

As all other usages of the Old Law, so also the sacrifices which God had ordained through Moses were only figures which were to refer to, and make preparation for, something to come. As soon as the fulfilment took place, and the object itself appeared in place of the figure, naturally the figure ceased to exist.

What is the sacrifice of the New Law? The sacrifice of the New Law is the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ, who by His death on the cross, offered Himself to His heavenly Father for us.

As no creature could efface and atone for the guilt of sin with which man was burdened, God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that as God-man He could offer such sacrifice of atonement as alone could render complete satisfaction to divine justice. Christ loved us, and offered Himself for us as a gift and sacrifice

to God as a sweet odor. Jesus sacrificed Himself voluntarily: no one could have taken His life if He had not willed to offer it up. He offered it as an immaculate sacrifice to God. Jesus is therefore at once the sacrifice and the officiating priest of the New Law. Instead of the blood of the sacrificial animal, the blood of Jesus flowed, and the cross was the altar upon which Jesus offered up His blood for the salvation of mankind.

The death of Jesus upon the cross was a true sacrifice, for: 1. Christ there offered Himself to His heavenly Father as a *visible gift,* to glorify Him and to render satisfaction to His justice for the sins of man. 2. Christ offered Himself voluntarily: He is Himself the *Priest* who for this was sent by the Father into the world. 3. He offered His body and His blood to *God* as atonement for the sins of man. 4. The *destruction* of the gift of sacrifice took place in the death of the Lord. In this sacrifice is contained in a most perfect manner everything that the sacrifice, and particularly the sacrifice of the Old Law, prefigured and indicated. It was the most perfect sacrifice of atonement. It was the most exalted sacrifice of praise, for no other sacrifice could so glorify God as the sacrifice of the Son of God. No other oblation could be as agreeable to God as thanksgiving, or mightier as a petition for us than the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. As this sacrifice unites in itself all others, and as regards the oblation is of infinite value, it follows that it suffices for all times and for all men, and that no other sacrifice is necessary.

Was all sacrifice to cease with the death of Christ? No; there was to be in the New Law of Grace a perpetual sacrifice, in order to renew continually that which was once accomplished on the cross, and to apply the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross to our souls.

That in the New Law of Grace a perpetual sacrifice was to exist may be gathered from the Old Law. The Old Law had a perpetual sacrifice, all nations offered sacrifices continually, and it is essential to the worship of God that man should continually offer Him sacrifice.

Although the sacrifice of the cross once accomplished was sufficient for all time, yet not the remembrance of a remote sacrifice only was to remain with men, but the sacrifice was to be ever present with them, and that which had been acquired for all men upon the

cross was, by a perpetual renewal of this sacrifice, to be applied also to each one.

Was such a sacrifice promised to us by God? Yes; even in the Old Law it was prefigured by the sacrifice of Melchisedech, and was foretold by the Prophet Malachias: "I have no pleasure in you (Jews), saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will not receive a gift of your hand; for from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation" (Mal. i. 10, 11). In this prophecy is clearly expressed that:

1. The Jewish sacrifice was to be abolished by God.

2. In its place a new sacrifice was to be offered, which should be a clean sacrifice (and as the Hebrew expression indicates), an oblation. This sacrifice was to be offered up to God perpetually among all nations, and in all places.

This prophecy certainly does not apply to the bloody sacrince of the cross, which is not offered at all times and in all places, but was only offered once, upon Golgotha. This prophecy applies, however, perfectly to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The sacrifice of Melchisedech was a figure of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Melchisedech was King of Salem, prince and priest, and as such he was a type of Jesus Christ. Melchisedech offered up bread and wine. His sacrifice was an offering of food. Jesus Christ was to institute a more exalted sacrifice.

A passage in the Book of Proverbs is also believed by the Fathers of the Church to refer to the holy sacraments and to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. "Wisdom (the Son of God) hath built herself a house (the Church); she hath hewn her out seven pillars (the holy sacraments). She hath slain her victims, mingled her wine, and set forth her table. . . . Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you" (Prov. ix. 1, 2, 5). Figuratively the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was foretold in the Paschal lamb, for the Paschal lamb was a sacrifice of food, a true sacrifice offered to God, which at the same time referred to the sacrifice which was to come, that of Jesus upon the cross, as also the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Which is the perpetual sacrifice foretold by Malachias? It is the Sacrifice of the Mass. The word Mass, taken from the Latin word Missa, missio, means sending or dismissal. In this sacrifice of the New Law God sends His only begotten Son down upon earth again,

and the Church sends Him on high as sacrifice to the heavenly Father.

The Church sends her priests in order that they, as the representatives of Christ, should send up their sacrifice and their prayers to God.

The book which contains the prescribed prayers for Mass is called Missal. Formerly there was a distinction made between the Mass of the Catechumens (i. e., that part of the Mass at which the Catechumens were allowed to assist), and the Mass of the faithful, at which only the baptized could assist. Before this latter began those who were not yet baptized were dismissed by the deacon with the words, which are now spoken at the end of the Mass: "Ite Missa est."

By whom was the Sacrifice of the Mass instituted? It was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper.

At the Last Supper Christ Himself celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the first time, and gave also to His apostles the power and command to continue to celebrate it. Christ at the Last Supper offered up Himself to His heavenly Father under the appearances of bread and wine. He said: "This is my body, which shall be offered up for you. This is the chalice of my blood, which shall be shed for you." By the separated species Jesus here evidently represents His death, which certainly was a sacrifice. He celebrates it beforehand, gives even now His body and His blood for us. He offers Himself for us to His heavenly Father, to whom He looks up, whom He thanks, to whom also He offers Himself upon the cross. We find here at the Last Supper the same parts which form the chief parts of the Mass, as: Offertory, Consecration, Communion. Without sacrifice the figure of the Holy Eucharist, the Paschal lamb, would not be exactly fulfilled. Jesus instituted the Supper of the New Law as sacrifice and sacrament for all time, by saying to His apostles: "Do this in commemoration of me."

Christ Himself offered sacrifice, and He then ordained His apostles priests in order that they, too, should offer sacrifice by changing bread and wine into His sacred flesh and blood.

For this reason the Council of Trent declares: "Whoever supposes by the words: 'Do this in commemoration of me,' Christ did not ordain the apostles as priests, or did not intend that they and other priests should offer up His body and blood, let him be anathema (excommunicated)."

Has Mass always been celebrated, from the time of the apostles and their successors? Yes; for even among the first Christians it was said that: "They persevered in the community of the breaking of bread."

St. Paul the apostle writes: "We (Christians) have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle, i. e., the Jews" (Heb. xiii. 10). Now if the Christians kept an altar, they must also have had a sacrifice. St. Paul said to the heathens: "You can not take part in the table of the Lord and in evil spirits." (Because the heathens offered sacrifices to evil spirits.)

In the third century Pope Felix decreed that Masses should be read in memory of the martyrs. The Council of Nice, A. D. 325, declares that only priests have the power to offer the sacrifice. St. Augustine calls Holy Mass the highest sacrifice, the sacrifice of our redemption, the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ.

Besides, the numerous testimonies of the Holy Fathers and the Councils, the most ancient Liturgies, as well as innumerable monuments, altars, chalices, priestly garments, and pictures from the first centuries, bear witness to the perpetual celebration of Mass in the Church.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. What is a sacrifice? A sacrifice is, in a religious sense, a visible gift which is offered to God to honor Him and worship Him as the supreme Lord.

3. What means to sacrifice in a general sense? It means to give up something valuable.

4. What is a sacrifice in a religious sense? An exterior, visible gift withdrawn from ordinary use to be consecrated to God.

5. For the proper idea of a sacrifice I mentioned four parts; name these. 1. A visible gift. 2. A priest who sacrifices and who is ordained for the purpose. 3. The gift offered to God alone. 4. The sacrificial gift must be broken or destroyed, as a sign of our absolute dependence upon God, who is the Lord of life and death.

6. Have there been sacrifices at all times? Yes; there have been sacrifices from the beginning of the world, and under the Old Law they were strictly commanded by God Himself.

7. What do we find among all nations? That there has always been sacrifice.

8. What did Cain sacrifice? He sacrificed the fruits of his fields.

9. What did Abel sacrifice? Abel sacrificed the first of his flocks.

10. What did Noe sacrifice? He sacrificed animals.

11. What did Abraham sacrifice? He sacrificed a ram.

12. What did the high priest Melchisedech sacrifice? He sacrificed bread and wine.

13. What do the heathens sacrifice? They sacrifice animals and even human beings.

14. Who was appointed to offer sacrifice in the time of Moses? A certain tribe was appointed for the service of sacrifice, the tribe of Levi, also called the tribe of priests.

15. How may the sacrifices of the Old Law be divided? They may be divided into, (a) bloody, and, (b) unbloody sacrifices.

16. Which sacrifices belonged to the bloody? 1. The burnt offering; 2. The peace offering; and, 3. The sacrifice of atonement.

17. When were the burnt offerings made? They were offered up morning and evening.

18. What were they called for this reason? They were called perpetual sacrifices.

19. In what manner were the burnt offerings made? The blood of the victim was sprinkled about the altar, the animal itself, however, being burnt.

20. With what intention or for what end were burnt offerings made to God? They were sacrifices of adoration and praise.

21. What did they express? The dominion of God over life and death, as well as complete resignation to God.

22. What animals were used for the burnt offerings? Three-year-old oxen, lambs a year old, and young doves.

23. What took place at the so-called peace offerings? At the peace offerings only a part of the victim was burnt; the remainder served as meal for the priests and the one in whose behalf the sacrifice was offered.

24. For what purpose were peace offerings made? They were offered up as sacrifices of thanksgiving and petition.

25. What was the third kind of bloody sacrifice? The sacrifice of atonement.

26. Why was it offered up? To atone for sins.

27. What took place at the sacrifices of atonement? The blood of the victim was sprinkled upon the altar.

28. What were the unbloody sacrifices? The unbloody sacrifices were offerings either of food, drink, or incense.

29. Why were the sacrifices of the Old Law abolished? Because they were only figures of the sacrifice of the New Law, and were, therefore, not to last longer than the Old Law itself.

30. What are figures? They are persons or acts that represent other and more important persons and acts.

31. What is the sacrifice of the New Law? The Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ.

32. Did Jesus offer Himself voluntarily or was He compelled thereto? He offered Himself voluntarily, as He can not be compelled.

33. Jesus is also called an immaculate, pure sacrifice. Why? Because Jesus was free from all sin.

34. Which was the altar upon which the High Priest sacrificed Himself? It was the cross.

35. Could there have been a sacrifice more agreeable to God? No.

36. Was not the sacrifice made by Jesus on the cross sufficient for the redemption of the world? Yes.

37. Why, then, did Jesus institute the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? As a remembrance and renewal of His death upon the cross.

38. What is the sacrifice that is offered up in all countries and zones of the earth, from the rising to the setting of the sun, by all nations? The Sacrifice of the Mass.

39. By what was the Sacrifice of the Mass or the sacrifice of the New Law prefigured in the Old Testament? By the sacrifice of Melchisedech, which consisted of bread and wine.

40. Which is the sacrifice foretold by Malachias? The Sacrifice of the Mass.

41. Whence is the word "Mass" derived? From the Latin word *Missa, missio,* meaning "sending," "dismissing."

42. Who instituted the Sacrifice of the Mass? Jesus Christ Himself, at the Last Supper, with the words, "Do this in commemoration of me."

43. What did Jesus wish to imply by these words? Jesus wished to say that the apostles and their successors were to do the same as He Himself had done.

44. Who, therefore, offered up the first Mass? Our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

45. How can you prove this? Jesus offered Himself, and consecrated the bread and wine.

46. How do you know that Jesus made the offertory? Holy Writ says: "He looked up to heaven, gave thanks, and blessed the bread."

47. Did the apostles also celebrate Mass? Yes; they celebrated it.

48. What does St. Augustine say concerning the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? He calls it the supreme sacrifice, the sacrifice of our redemption, the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

49. What does the Council of Nice declare? That only priests have power to offer up the sacrifice.

50. Which sacrifice can this only be? The Sacrifice of the Mass.

51. What are still preserved from the earliest times of Christianity? Altars, chalices, priestly garments, pictures, etc.

52. What proof is given by the existence of these things? That Holy Mass has been offered up from the time of Jesus up to our own times uninterruptedly.

53. Is, then, Holy Mass an institution of modern times? No; it is not.

XI.—The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (Continued).

In explanation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we will now ask the question: "What is the difference between the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross?"

The Sacrifice of the Mass is essentially the same sacrifice as that of the cross; the difference being the manner of offering. The word *essential* means something which is the opposite of accidental. Something is essential if in a necessary and indispensable way it is part of an object. Accidental, however, is that which is not indispensable in the making of an object.

I will make this more intelligible to you by an example. A tree must have a root, trunk, and branches, otherwise it is not a tree. These things are necessarily essential to the tree. A table must have legs and a top, but it is not absolutely necessary that it should be

highly polished. That is accidental. Now, the *difference* between the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is an *unessential* one. It has reference only to the *manner* in which the sacrifice is offered, not to the *nature* of the sacrifice.

The one same sacrifice is offered, but in a twofold manner. We shall learn how the manner of offering differs.

Why is the Sacrifice of the Mass the same sacrifice as that of the cross?

Because in both it is the same High Priest who offers, and the same Victim that is offered—namely, Jesus Christ our Lord.

He, therefore, who offers the Sacrifice of the Mass and He who is offered are one and the same. We know that the priest is Christ's representative, and that at the consecration he says the words: "This is *my* Body, this is *my* Blood." *Christ* speaks and consecrates, not the priest, but Christ through him. The Victim is also the same. The Body and the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ are offered up in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

How is the manner of offering different in both?

On the cross Christ offered Himself in a bloody manner, but in the Mass He offers Himself in an unbloody manner, to renew the sacrifice accomplished on the cross, without suffering or dying. The glorified Body of the Lord is no longer capable of suffering or death. The bloody sacrifice was to take place only once.

How urgently these facts ought to admonish us to assist at Holy Mass with reverence and devotion! And yet how many Christians are there who indifferently neglect to hear Mass, or, when they do assist, are so preoccupied that even at the solemn moment of Consecration they give themselves up to every distraction.

Which are the principal parts of the Mass?

1. The Offertory; 2. The Consecration, and 3. The Communion. The essential part is from the Consecration to the Communion of the Priest inclusive. At the Offertory, the unconsecrated bread and the unconsecrated wine are offered up. The most important moment is the Consecration, at which bread and wine are changed into the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. At the communion the priest receives the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of Christ. In order to draw the attention of the faithful present to the principal parts of the Mass, the bell is rung.

To whom do we offer the Sacrifice of the Mass? We *offer* it to God alone. We also, however, commemorate the saints in it. We

do not *offer* the Sacrifice of the Mass to a saint, or a martyr, or an angel, but to God alone. He is the supreme Lord of heaven and earth. He is the plenitude of all graces. From Him comes all help, and to Him alone is the Sacrifice of the Mass offered. The Sacrifice of the Mass is an act of adoration, and for this reason it can and must only be offered to God alone, who is the supreme Lord. It is not forbidden to celebrate the memory of the saints at Holy Mass, but we know that the saints are friends and servants of God, and to them belongs *veneration*, and not worship.

How do we celebrate the memory of the saints at Mass?

1. By rendering thanks to God for all the graces bestowed upon them in this life, and for the glory they now enjoy in heaven; and 2. By imploring their intercession for us.

God Himself has honored the saints and has done wonderful things for them in life and death. Why should we not honor them also, and thank the Lord for the graces and happiness bestowed upon them, for they are still in communion with us? Furthermore, by asking the saints to unite their prayers with ours, we are doing what is pleasing to God.

What are the ends for which we offer the Sacrifice of the Mass to God?

We offer it to God:

1. As a sacrifice of praise for His honor and glory;

2. As a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the graces and benefits received from Him;

3. As a sacrifice of propitiation for the many offenses given to Him; and

4. As a sacrifice of petition, to obtain His assistance in our necessities of soul and body.

We offer, therefore, the Sacrifice of the Mass to God:

1. As a sacrifice of praise. Already in the Old Law God promised, through the mouth of His prophets, that by this sacrifice His name would become glorious among the people. Whereas the figures of the Old Testament and the sacrifice of the Old Law only feebly and imperfectly expressed the adoration and glorification due to God, He has made it possible for us in the New Law to offer Him a worthy sacrifice of praise in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. As a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Innumerable and boundless are the benefits which God sends us, and every sensible person should recognize it as his duty to render thanks for them to God.

Your sacrifice of thanksgiving is to be a worthy equivalent of God's infinite benefits; then it must be of infinite value. Could there be a sacrifice of thanksgiving of greater value and more pleasing to God than His only begotten Son? Do not neglect, therefore, during Mass to thank God most fervently for the blessings which you have received.

3. As a sacrifice of propitiation for the many offenses against Him. Upon the cross Jesus reconciled sinful mankind to God through the sacrifice of His Blood and life. As the sacrifice of the cross was a sacrifice of propitiation, so also is the Sacrifice of the Mass. Jesus merited for us upon the cross the grace of justification and the pardon of sins; in the Sacrifice of the Mass this merit is applied to us. It is a perpetual sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of the world. A certain saint has said: "Earth owes her preservation to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Without it she would long ago have been destroyed on account of the sins of mankind."

In the Sacrifice of the Mass we do not receive directly forgiveness of sins as in the Sacrament of Penance, but indirectly we do, since God, for the sake of His Son's sacrifice, grants us the grace of repentance. For this reason, i. e., because the Catholic Church believes and teaches that the Sacrifice of the Mass is a sacrifice of propitiation, it is also offered for the departed who, not yet free from sin, are still suffering in purgatory. For the forgiveness of mortal sins it is, of course, necessary to receive the Sacrament of Penance. We may, however, by devoutly assisting at the celebration of Mass, obtain the grace of repentance and conversion, and obtain also the remission of venial sins and of temporary punishment for sin. For this reason we should, during Holy Mass, think of our sins with a contrite heart, and beg of God the grace of repentance.

4. As a sacrifice of petition, in order to obtain His assistance in all our necessities of soul and body.

In all our spiritual and corporal necessities we should, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, turn confidently to God our heavenly Father, and to Jesus our loving Saviour. We know from Christian doctrine that Christ is our Mediator and Intercessor with God; we may, therefore, with complete confidence, more especially during Holy Mass, turn to Him and beg that our prayers be heard. When you have sickness at your home, when cares oppress your heart, go

and offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as a sacrifice of petition, and the prayers of the priest will be united to the petitions of the saints and the Blessed Virgin.

To whom are the fruits of Holy Mass applied? To the whole Church, the living and the dead. There are general, special, and most special fruits of the Holy Mass. The general fruits are applied to the whole Church by virtue of the communion, especially to those assisting at the Mass. Besides this general fruit there is also a special fruit. This is applied to those for whom in particular the Mass is offered. The most special fruit goes to the celebrant of the Mass. The Masses for the dead are called Requiem Masses.

At all times the Holy Mass has been offered for special intentions just as it is to-day. In olden times the faithful brought with them bread and wine, of which a part was either consecrated or used for the Sacrifice of the Mass, the rest was intended for the poor and also for the support of the priest, according to the words of the apostle, "Those who serve the altar shall live by the altar." Later the faithful brought in place of bread and wine a gift of money. Thus arose the custom of giving so-called stipends for Masses, which are by no means tendered as payment for the sacrifice, but are a voluntary offering toward the support of priests.

What is the proper time and place for celebrating Mass? The divine Saviour celebrated the sacrifice in the evening, as did also the early Christians. In the time of persecutions, however, we find that it generally took place before sunrise. It was only after the times of persecution that a certain order for it could be established. Holy Mass is now solemnized only before noon.

Christ celebrated Mass in a room; and in the early period of Christianity Mass was celebrated in the houses of the faithful. During times of persecution the Holy Sacrifice was celebrated in underground caves and in the burial places of martyrs (catacombs). Afterward churches were erected, and in them the Holy Sacrifice was celebrated. The buildings intended for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice were consecrated, and the relics of martyrs and other saints were deposited in them. The altars of the churches were erected toward the rising sun. In front of the churches there was usually an open space for the penitents to remain during divine worship. There was also to be found a well, or wash basin, in which the people washed hands and face before entering the sacred edifice. The water in these basins was blessed on certain

days of the year. The altars were at first perfectly plain; later, however, more costly altars of marble were erected. It is usually not permitted to read Mass anywhere except in a consecrated or blessed church or chapel, and there must be an altar stone blessed by the bishop. The altar must be covered with three folds of linen. There must also be a crucifix upon it, and at least two lighted candles during the celebration of Mass.

I will now explain to you the vestments which the priest wears during Mass, and the vessels of which he makes use. The vestments worn by the priest are the following:

1. The shoulder cloth (*amice*) represents the cloth with which the face of Christ was covered. The sacrificial victim is also thus represented, because a cloth used to be bound around the head of the one condemned to death.

2. The alb, the long white garment, is a reminder of that vesture which Herod caused to be put upon the Saviour, and is a symbol of purity. The alb symbolizes the humanity of Christ, and who, as high priest, is thus represented by the priest who takes His place.

3. The girdle reminds us of the rope with which Jesus was bound for the scourging, and by it the Church urges us to bridle our evil desires.

4. The maniple served formerly as a cloth with which to dry tears. It reminds us of the handkerchief used by Jesus, also of the bands with which His hands were tied, and it calls upon us to undertake cheerfully all hardships and cares.

5. The stole, the mark of priestly authority, is a reminder that God through Christ has given us back the robe of honor of His grace, and it symbolizes the rope which was tied around the neck of Christ with which He was dragged from place to place.

6. The chasuble (formerly a long mantle) reminds us of the purple robe which was put on Jesus to mock Him, and signifies that sweet yoke, the cross of Christ. It typifies in its two parts the commandment of the love of God and our neighbor.

The different colors of the priest's vestments have also their meaning:

1. The white signifies innocence and spiritual joy, and is worn upon festivals in honor of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, the angels, confessors and virgins.

2. The red, symbol of the love of God, is worn on the feasts of Pentecost, the finding and exaltation of the cross, and of martyrs.

3. The green, symbol of eternal hope, is worn from Pentecost until Advent.

4. The violet or purple, token of humility and penance, used in penitential seasons, in Advent and from Septuagesima Sunday until the end of Lent.

5. The black, color of death, used on Good Friday and in all Masses for the dead.

The altar stone signifies Mount Calvary; the altar cloths, the burial cloths of Jesus; the steps before the altar, the Mount of Olives and the way to Calvary; the Missal signifies the book of debt which was canceled by the sacrifice of Jesus; the two cruets betoken the sponge filled with gall and vinegar given to Jesus upon the cross.

The sacred vessels of which the priest makes use at Mass, are:

(a) The chalice, the upper part of which (the cup) signifies the tomb of Christ. It must be made either of solid gold, or of silver with a substantial gold surface.

(b) The paten, a small plate, upon which the Host lies; this, with the cover of the chalice (pall), represents the grave stone.

(c) The purificatory signifies the handkerchief.

(d) The corporal, the grave cloths.

(e) The chalice cloth, the mantle of Jesus.

Why is the Mass said in Latin?

The Catholic faith spread from Rome, where Christ's representative on earth still resides and reigns. The Latin and Greek languages were the languages universally used at the institution of Christianity. Now a dead language, the Latin tongue does not change with the times, like other languages. It was at all times the language of the Church. All the priests of Christendom stand united, by the uniformity of the Church's language, with the centre of Christendom, Rome. The Christian people, not understanding the Church's language, unite themselves in spirit with the officiating priest.

It now remains for us to explain the different ceremonies of the Mass. As Holy Mass is an unbloody renewal of Christ's death of sacrifice upon the cross, so every action at Holy Mass has a meaning and reference to the bitter Passion of Jesus.

The priest with an acolyte approaches the altar from the sacristy; this reminds us how Jesus with His apostles went to the Garden of Olives to begin His Holy Passion.

The priest prays at the foot of the altar; this denotes how Christ prayed in the Garden of Olives with His disciples.

The priest ascends the steps, kisses the altar and goes to the epistle side; this tells us how Jesus went forth to meet the servants of the high priest, was betrayed by Judas with a kiss, and led before the high priest Annas.

The priest then goes to the middle of the altar, and says three times the Kyrie Eleison; this signifies Christ led from Annas to Caiphas, and denied three times by Peter.

The priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum;*" this denotes how Christ turned to Peter and moved him to repentance.

The priest goes to the epistle side and prays; this signifies how Jesus was led before Pilate and falsely accused.

The priest goes from the epistle side to the middle of the altar, and then to the gospel side, where he reads the Gospel; this signifies how Christ was sent from Pilate to Herod, and was mocked and derided by the latter.

The priest goes from the gospel side again to the middle of the altar; this signifies how Jesus was sent back from Herod to Pilate.

The priest uncovers the chalice; this recalls and signifies how Christ was stripped for the scourging.

The priest offers bread and wine; this signifies how Jesus was bound to the pillar and scourged.

The priest covers the chalice after the Offertory; this denotes how Jesus was crowned with thorns.

The priest washes his hands; this signifies how Pilate declared Jesus innocent by washing his hands.

The priest turns toward the people and says, "*Orate fratres!*" Christ covered with blood and wounds was presented to the people with the words, "Behold the man!"

The priest says the Preface; this signifies how Christ was condemned to the death of the cross.

The priest makes the sign of the cross over the bread and wine; this reminds us how Jesus was fastened to the cross with nails.

The priest elevates the Sacred Host; Christ nailed to the cross was raised up upon it.

The priest elevates the chalice; Christ shed His precious Blood.

The priest prays after the consecration; Christ hung three hours upon the cross.

The priest strikes his breast and prays for the forgiveness of his sins; this recalls how Jesus promised paradise to the penitent thief.

The priest says the Our Father; this betokens how Jesus recommended His Blessed Mother to the beloved disciple John.

The priest divides the Sacred Host; this signifies the death of Jesus.

The priest strikes his breast and says, "*Agnus Dei;*" the side of Christ was opened with a lance.

The priest communicates; Christ is laid in the tomb.

The priest goes to the epistle side and prays; Jesus rises from the dead and meets the weeping women going to the grave.

The priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum;*" this signifies how Jesus appeared to His apostles and said to them, "Peace be with you!"

The priest says the last prayers at the epistle side; Jesus, after His resurrection, remained for forty days with His beloved disciples.

The priest says for the last time, "*Dominus vobiscum!*" Jesus ascends gloriously into heaven.

The priest blesses the people and reads the last Gospel; Jesus sends the Holy Ghost upon His apostles and disciples.

Application.—Endeavor to assist daily at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with sincere devotion and profound reverence. At the Offertory, offer yourself with Jesus Christ to the heavenly Father; at the consecration pray humbly to your Saviour and beg His forgiveness; at the communion, communicate at least spiritually, i. e., awaken an ardent desire to unite yourself with the Lord in the sacrament of His love

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

2. What difference is there between the sacrifice of the Mass and the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross? The sacrifice of the Mass is essentially the same sacrifice as that of the cross. The manner of offering is different.

3. What is meant by the word essential? That is essential which is necessary for the making of an object.

4. What is the opposite of essential? The opposite of essential is accidental.

5. What is meant by accidental? Accidental is that which does not necessarily belong to an object.

6. Is the difference between the sacrifice of the Mass and the sacrifice of Jesus essential or accidental? It is accidental.

7. Which is the accidental difference? Upon the cross Jesus offered Himself in a bloody manner, but in the Mass in an unbloody manner, because in the Mass He does not suffer nor die.

8. What, however, is exactly the same in both sacrifices? In both sacrifices He is the same who offers and is offered—Jesus Christ our Lord.

9. How do we know that the priest is Christ's representative in the Mass? Because the priest says at the consecration: "This is my Body, this is my Blood."

10. What would he say if he were not the representative of Christ? He would say: This is the Body of Jesus, this is the Blood of Jesus.

11. Which are the principal parts of the Mass? The Offertory, the Consecration, the Communion.

12. What is the essential part? From the Consecration to the Communion of the priest, inclusive.

13. When does the Offertory take place? After the Credo (or after the Gospel when there is no Credo).

14. What is done by the priest at the Offertory? He uncovers the Chalice, takes the Paten, on which the Host lies, and raises both on high, looks up to heaven, and offers the bread. Then he takes the Chalice, pours wine and a few drops of water into it, and presents these gifts as an offering.

15. Which is the second part of the Mass and the most solemn moment thereof? The Consecration.

16. Why is it a solemn moment? Because at that moment Jesus descends from heaven to be present under the forms of bread and wine.

17. To whom do we *offer* the sacrifice of the Mass? We *offer* it to God alone; however, we also celebrate in it the memory of the saints.

18. Why do we offer it to God alone? Because He is the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, and to Him alone belongs all adoration.

19. Why is it right and proper that we should celebrate the memory of the saints in holy Mass? Because the saints still belong to our Communion.

20. What do the saints form in the Communion of the Catholic Church? They form the Church Triumphant.

21. What are the ends for which we offer the Mass to God? 1. As a sacrifice of praise for His honor and glory. 2. As a sacrifice of thanksgiving for graces and benefits received from Him. 3. As a sacrifice of propitiation for the many offenses given to Him; and 4. As a sacrifice of petition, in order to obtain His assistance in all our necessities of soul and body.

22. Does God give us everything that we pray for? No; God does not.

23. What does God deny us? That which is not good for us.

24. Where are all our petitions offered up to God? In the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

25. Is there a more effectual sacrifice of petition than holy Mass? No; there can not be a more effectual one.

26. What ought we chiefly to pray for? The things of eternity.

27. Of what should we think when we pray for temporal things? Of the words: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but lose his immortal soul?"

28. To whom are the fruits of the Mass applied? To the whole Church, to the living, and the dead.

29. How may the fruits of holy Mass be divided? Into general and special and most special fruits.

30. To whom are the general fruits of the Mass applied? To the whole Church; militant and suffering; especially to those who assist at Mass.

31. To whom are the special fruits of the Mass applied? To those living and dead for whom the priest offers the Mass.

32. What is understood by Mass stipends? Any gift which is voluntarily contributed by the faithful for the support of the priest.

33. Can the holy Mass itself be paid for? No; it is of such supreme value that it can not be paid for.

34. When must holy Mass be celebrated? It must be celebrated before noon.

35. Where must it be celebrated? Upon a consecrated altar, and as a rule only in a church consecrated by the bishop.

36. Where was it celebrated in times of persecution? In subterraneous caverns.

37. What must there be upon an altar where Mass is read? A crucifix and two lighted candles.

38. Mention the different parts of the vestments worn at Mass. 1. The shoulder cloth, or amice; 2. the alb; 3. the girdle; 4. the maniple; 5. the stole; 6. the chasuble.

39. What do the different colors of the vestments signify? White signifies innocence and spiritual joy; red, the love of God; green, the hope of eternal life; violet or purple, humility and penance; black, deep mourning.

40. What is the application? We should endeavor to assist at holy Mass daily when able to do so.

41. Why ought we to do this? Because the graces are boundless which flow upon us by assisting devoutly at holy Mass.

XII.—Holy Communion.

Having explained the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we come in to-day's instruction to the doctrine of Holy Communion.

The word communion means union. To communicate means to unite. The Catechism, to the question "What is Holy Communion?" answers, "Holy Communion is the receiving of the real body and blood of Jesus Christ for the nourishment of our souls." That the Holy Eucharist was instituted as the food of souls we know from Our Lord's own words, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Jesus even commanded the partaking of His sacred flesh and blood with the words, "Take ye and eat!" Our divine Saviour is indeed united with us by remaining with us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and also in offering Himself for us in the Sacrifice of the Mass. But we are united with Him in a much more intimate manner when He comes and takes up His abode in us. In Holy Communion we are not only united with Christ, but also with all the faithful who receive Holy Communion, which is evident from the words of St. Paul, "For we being many are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread" (I. Cor. x. 17).

Was it God or the Church that commanded us to receive Holy Communion? It was God who commanded it, and the Church likewise, for Christ our Lord says expressly, "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (John vi. 54).

In early Christian times the faithful received daily, later only every Sunday. Because of the increasing tepidity of Christians, synods in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries made it of obligation for the faithful to receive Holy Communion at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost under pain of excommunication. Not until the fourth Lateran Council did the Church establish the commandment to receive at least once a year during the Paschal time. Realizing what Holy Communion is, it is incredible that many Christians should be so negligent about receiving it.

Must we also drink the chalice in order to receive the blood of Christ? No; for under the appearance of bread we receive not only the body, but also the blood of Christ. You have been told that

under either form of bread or wine Christ is present wholly and undivided. Under the appearance of bread His true, living, and glorious body is present, and united with it is His sacred blood. It is, therefore, plain that under the appearance of bread we receive not only the body, but also the blood of Jesus Christ.

That we can receive the Holy Eucharist under one form only is made plain from the words of Christ: "He that *eateth* me shall also live for my sake." "I am the living bread. He that eateth this *bread* shall live forever." He thus gives the same promise for the partaking of His sacred body under the appearance of bread as for its reception under both species. And St. Paul imposes the same punishment upon the unworthy reception under one or both appearances by saying, "Whosoever shall eat this bread *or* drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord."

The Church has professed this to be her belief by distributing Holy Communion under one form. This was particularly the case in times of persecution when the faithful were permitted to take the Blessed Sacrament to their homes, and administered the Sacrament themselves. At one time in the history of the Church, under the reign of Pope Leo I., it was commanded that the chalice be given to the faithful in public Communion, but this was done to combat the sect of the Manicheans. These heretics condemned the use of wine as something diabolical, and in order to prevent them from approaching the Communion rail with the Christians the chalice was ordered to be passed to communicants. But this was only for a time. When this heresy disappeared Communion was again given under one form only. When later the heretic Huss, and after him the Protestants, required Communion to be given under both forms, the Church adhered firmly to Communion under one species—the species of bread.

At the Council of Trent the Church proclaimed the law that Holy Communion was to be received by the laity under one form only, and that a departure from this rule without authority from the Church was not allowed. Those who did not believe in the undivided presence of Jesus under the one form of bread were threatened with excommunication.

For what reason does the Catholic Church give Holy Communion to the faithful under one kind only, under the form of bread?

1. To prevent the precious blood from being profaned, since, under

the appearance of wine, it would easily be spilled, especially when a great number of persons receive.

2. The danger of profanation would be still greater if the precious blood under the form of wine were carried to the sick.

3. Because some persons dislike wine and can not take it.

4. Many would object to drinking out of a chalice from which so many others had partaken.

5. Finally, by receiving Holy Communion under one form only, heretics who declare it necessary to receive under both forms are continually rebuked.

But why, then, did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist under both forms?

Because He instituted it not only as a sacrament, but also as a sacrifice for which both kinds are required.

The Sacrifice of the Mass was prefigured in the Old Law by the sacrifice of Melchisedech, who offered bread and wine. The forms of bread and wine in the Mass represent the death of Jesus upon the cross. This representation would be wanting, however, if only one of the forms were present, for in the Sacrifice of the Mass the destruction of the gift of sacrifice, which took place upon the cross, the shedding of blood and the death of Jesus are represented.

What graces does Holy Communion impart to our souls?

1. It unites us most intimately with Christ and increases sanctifying grace in us.

2. It weakens our evil inclinations and gives us a desire and strength to combat them, and to do good.

3. It cleanses us from venial sin and preserves us from mortal sin; and,

4. It is to us a pledge of our future resurrection and everlasting happiness (John vi. 55).

1. The first effect of Holy Communion is that it unites us most intimately with Christ. In Holy Communion Jesus enters into us and takes up His abode with us, not as man only, but also as God, with His whole nature and substance.

What a sublime thought! He, whom the heavens and the earth can not contain, before whom the choirs of blessed spirits fall down adoring, He vouchsafes to dwell among us weak, sinful men. What holy sentiments of love, reverence, and gratitude should fill us! How this ought to strengthen in us the resolution of being faithful to Jesus, so that He may remain in our hearts!

As the material bread gives us nourishment and strength for the body, so Holy Communion nourishes our soul. Holy Communion increases the life of the soul, sanctifying grace. For this reason the divine Saviour said, "He who eateth me shall live in me."

2. Holy Communion weakens our evil inclinations and gives us a desire and strength to do good. The partaking of the forbidden fruit in paradise had as a consequence for man concupiscence and an inclination to evil. Holy Communion strengthens our weak wills and drives from our hearts bad thoughts and desires. We can appropriately compare Holy Communion to a healing medicine which lessens the disease and gives new strength.

3. Holy Communion cleanses us from venial sins and preserves us from mortal sin. Holy Communion is a strong shield against the assaults of the evil one, and where Jesus is on guard and protects us, the devil has no power over us. Jesus Himself says, "He that eateth of this bread shall not hunger," i. e., will have no more desire for earthly pleasures.

4. Holy Communion is a pledge of our future resurrection and everlasting happiness. St. Augustine says, "Those who partake of this food and this drink will become immortal and incorruptible."

Does every one receive in Holy Communion the graces it is intended to give?

No; he who receives Holy Communion unworthily—that is, in the state of mortal sin—brings damnation upon himself. God is all holy, and whosoever would receive Him into his heart must be worthy, must be free from grievous sin. For this reason a worthy Communion must be preceded by a valid confession. Should any one knowingly and purposely omit a mortal sin in confession, it is rendered invalid, and a subsequent Communion would be unworthy. Those who receive unworthily, in a state of mortal sin, do not receive the graces of Communion and commit a great crime against God. Holy Scripture says, "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink this chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord; he eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord." The Ark of the Covenant brought happiness and blessing upon the pious Israelites, but misfortune and a curse upon the impious Philistines.

What sin does he commit who dares to receive unworthily? Like Judas, he commits a horrible sacrilege. Judas was, as you know, that one of the twelve apostles who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of

silver. Judas had made an agreement with the Scribes and Pharisees to deliver Jesus up to them. Yet with this plan of treason in his heart he ate with Jesus at the Last Supper, and when Jesus revealed to the apostles present that one of their number would betray Him, with the rest, he asked, "Lord, is it I?" And the Lord answered, "Yes; it is." These words of the Saviour's did not touch him, and he went from the supper to the Garden of Olives, where he betrayed Jesus with a kiss.

Certain judgment awaits those who receive unworthily. We read with horror of the hatred which the Jews bore Jesus and of how they clamored for His death with cries of "Crucify him! Crucify him!" The person who receives unworthily joins these enemies of Christ and ventures to seek the destruction of God.

What are frequently the consequences of an unworthy communion in this life? Blindness and hardness of heart, sometimes sudden death, and other temporal punishment.

Hardness of heart consists in the lack of desire on the part of the sinner to amend his life. He becomes perfectly indifferent to his soul's salvation or damnation. This hardness causes the sinner to die unrepentant and to be lost eternally. God punished King Baltassar for his sacrilege, and Heliodorus and Oza who irreverently touched the Ark of the Covenant. How much more severely will not God punish the sacrilege which is committed upon His own sacred body and blood!

If a person has received unworthily, can he obtain forgiveness, and what must he do?

The Catholic Church teaches that God is willing to pardon even the greatest sinner and the worst crimes if repented of and confessed.

If any one, therefore, should have had the awful misfortune of committing this crime he must repent of it and make a general confession, including the time since his last valid Confession and Communion. And this ought not to be postponed, so as not to run the risk of dying in sin.

What must we do before receiving Holy Communion when we have committed a grievous sin?

We must make a good confession before we receive.

Holy Scripture says: "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice." The Almighty desires to enter only into a pure heart. If we wish, then, that Jesus should be with us and remain with us, we must prepare a clean dwelling

for Him, a holy temple, and this is done by cleansing our hearts from every sin.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of Holy Communion.

2. What means Communion? Communion means uniting.

3. What is Holy Communion? Holy Communion is receiving the Body and Blood of Our Lord.

4. Is Holy Communion a food for the body or for the soul? It is a food for the soul.

5. Whence do we know this? From the words of Jesus Himself.

6. What are these words? "My Flesh is meat indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed."

7. Has Jesus left the receiving of Holy Communion to our discretion, or has He made it an obligation? Jesus has expressly commanded us to receive.

8. With what words? With the words: "Take ye and eat."

9. In what other way is Jesus already united to us? By His Presence in the Blessed Sacrament and by offering Himself for us in Holy Mass.

10. But how does Jesus unite Himself most intimately with us? By His taking up His abode with us in Holy Communion.

11. Are we, by receiving the Holy Eucharist, united with Jesus only? No; we are also united with all the faithful who receive Holy Communion.

12. Was it God, or the Church, that commanded us to receive Holy Communion? God has commanded it, and likewise the Church. Christ Our Lord says expressly: "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you."

13. To whom do these words apply? To those who will not receive Holy Communion.

14. Is Holy Communion as indispensable for salvation as Baptism? No; it is not.

15. How often did the early Christians receive? In the beginning they received daily, and later every Sunday.

16. Later on how often were they required to receive? At least upon the three great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost.

17. How often at the very least is it commanded in our times? At least once a year, during Paschal time.

18. Is this command of the Church to be so interpreted that we may receive not more than once a year? No; we should receive frequently.

19. Must we also drink the Chalice in order to receive the Blood of Christ? No; for under the appearances of bread we also receive His Blood.

20. Which Pope ordered the reception of Holy Communion under both forms? Pope Leo I.

21. What was the cause of this? This was occasioned by the Manicheans, who detested wine as something diabolical. These Manicheans attempted to approach Holy Communion with the Christians, and in order to prevent this, Pope Leo commanded the Chalice to be received by the faithful in public Communion.

22. When this sect of the Manicheans ceased to exist, what was done? Holy Communion was again given under one form only, namely, that of bread.

23. Which Church Council expressly commanded that Holy Communion should be distributed to the laity under one form only? The Council of Trent.

24. Why does the Catholic Church give Holy Communion to the faithful under one form only? Because of the danger of profanation if the Chalice were passed to them.

25. What might happen, especially when large numbers are receiving Holy Communion? The Sacred Blood might be spilled.

26. Give another reason. Many persons have a dislike for wine or can not take it.

27. Still another reason? Many persons are averse to drinking from a common Chalice for sanitary reasons.

28. And what is the last reason which I mentioned? The reception of Holy Communion under one form is a continual rebuke to those heretics who insist that Communion should be received under both kinds.

29. But why then did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist in both kinds? Because He instituted it not only as a sacrament, but also as a sacrifice, for which both kinds are required.

30. By what was the Sacrifice of the Mass prefigured in the Old Testament? By the sacrifice of Melchisedech, who offered bread and wine.

31. How many forms must the Sacrifice of the New Law have, therefore? It must also have two forms.

32. What do the two forms of the Sacrifice of the Mass represent? They represent the sacrificial death of Jesus upon the cross.

33. What graces does Holy Communion impart to our souls? (Answer as in lesson.)

34. Which is the first grace or effect of Holy Communion? It unites us most intimately with Christ.

35. How does this union take place? Jesus enters into us and takes up His abode with us.

36. As what does He visit us? As God and man, substantial and perfect.

37. Jesus, the Son of God, before whom the Choirs of Blessed Spirits fall adoring, He whom the heavens and the earth can not contain, He vouchsafes to dwell with us. How should this impress us? With reverence, love, and gratitude.

38. He who has received Jesus worthily, who has experienced the happiness which those feel who bear the Saviour in their hearts, what does such a person desire? He wishes that Jesus might remain with him.

39. What resolution will he make? He will resolve to remain faithful to Jesus.

40. What does Holy Communion further effect in us? It weakens our evil inclinations, and gives us a desire and strength to do good.

41. What further effects does Holy Communion have in us? It cleanses our hearts from venial sins and preserves us from mortal sins.

42. What else is Holy Communion? It is a pledge of our future resurrection and everlasting happiness.

43. Does every one receive in Holy Communion the graces it is intended to give? No; he who receives Holy Communion unworthily—that is, in a state of mortal sin—commits an awful crime and brings damnation upon himself.

44. When do we receive worthily? When we are free from grievous sin.

45. What, therefore, must absolutely precede a worthy Communion if we are in mortal sin? A valid confession.

46. What sin do those commit who dare to receive unworthily? Like Judas, they commit an awful sacrilege.

47. What fearful crime was Judas guilty of? He betrayed Our Lord and Saviour for thirty pieces of silver.

48. What are frequently the consequences of an unworthy Communion, even in this life? (Answer as in lesson.)

49. Does God send the punishment always at the time? No; the punishment does not always come at once.

50. What punishment, however, follows immediately upon the transgression? The punishment of a bad conscience.

51. Is, then, the person who receives unworthily lost irrevocably under all circumstances? No; he can still obtain pardon.

52. Upon what conditions? That he repent of his sin and make confession.

53. If we do not wish to receive unworthily, what ought we to do? We should prepare ourselves for a worthy Communion by a valid confession.

XIII.—Holy Communion (Continued).

Let us proceed in our instruction by asking, How should we prepare our soul for the worthy reception of Holy Communion even further than seeking forgiveness for our mortal sins? We should endeavor, 1. To cleanse our soul even from venial sin; and, 2. To excite in our heart sentiments of fervor and devotion. Our reverence for the Holy Eucharist and consideration for our salvation require that we should prepare ourselves as worthily as possible for Holy Communion. In proportion to the degree of our worthiness Holy Communion confers more or less grace upon us. When the King of kings, the Lord of hosts, visits us, our reverence requires that we should prepare for Him a worthy dwelling and drive even venial sin from our hearts. For God is all holy, and as such abhors the least sin. For this reason we ought to be very careful, particularly during the time which elapses between our Confession and Communion, so as not to stain our soul with even venial sin.

Does venial sin render our Communions unworthy?

No; but it lessens the graces we would otherwise receive. Venial sin does not separate us from God, and is, therefore, not an obstacle to our union with God. But it draws the soul to things created. It is an inordinate inclination for something other than that for which the soul is created, and thus places an obstacle to the complete and undivided surrender of the soul to God. It prevents the entire union of the soul with God, and so diminishes the fruits of Holy Communion.

How can we excite sentiments of fervor and devotion in our heart?

By pious meditation and devout exercises; by prayer, zeal, and devotion. We should meditate particularly upon that infinite love of which the Holy Eucharist is so signal a proof; for there is no greater love than this, that Jesus should give Himself to us as our food. It is also commendable on the days of Confession and Communion to perform some special work of penance, give alms, fast, mortify ourselves in some way or another, visit and console the sick, etc.

Which are the best pious exercises before Holy Communion?

The acts, 1. Of faith and adoration; 2. Of humility and contrition;

and, 3. Of hope, love, and ardent desire. The first act recommended is that of faith, the act of faith in general, as well as a special firm belief in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. How may we make this act of faith before receiving? In the following manner: "O my God, I firmly believe all that Thou hast revealed, and that Thy Holy Catholic Church presents to us to be believed. But especially I believe that Thou art really present in this most holy Sacrament as God and man with flesh and blood, truly and substantially, because Thou, the infallible Truth, hast declared it."

The second act is that of adoration. The knowledge of the truth that God Himself visits us causes us to exclaim adoringly with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

The third act is that of humility. God is the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, a Being whom heaven and earth can not contain. As Peter once said. "Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man!" And as the centurion of Capharnaum cried out, "O Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, but say only the word and my servant shall be healed!" So let us say before Holy Communion, saying instead of the words "my servant" the words "my soul"! Humility consists in a lively appreciation of our unworthiness to receive the Most Holy. If we know our unworthiness, then we also know the reason thereof, our sinfulness, and to this knowledge is joined contrition for our transgressions which have rendered us unworthy of all graces, but especially of union with God. The more thorough our contrition is the more earnestly shall we strive not to offend God any more by sin. Furthermore we should practise hope, i. e., we should not despair notwithstanding our sinfulness, but rather approach with confidence in Him who has said, "Come unto me, all you who are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you." This consoling assurance fills us with hope. If Jesus has given Himself to us as the food of our souls, thus proving His infinite love for us, we would indeed be culpable and unfeeling did we not repay this immeasurable love with all our own love.

Another act is that of ardent desire. Jesus spoke at the Last Supper those ever memorable words, "With desire have I desired to eat this pasch with you."

Ought not we to have a similar desire to unite ourselves with Jesus? The greater our desire is for Jesus, the more gladly will He come to us, the more abundantly will He grant us His grace.

How must we prepare ourselves as to body?

1. We must be fasting; that is, from twelve o'clock the night before we must not have taken even the least thing by way of food or drink; and, 2. We must be decently attired.

Though God beholds the interior dispositions of our soul, yet reverence and respect for God should be manifested exteriorly. When we approach Holy Communion we should be dressed decorously. At the same time we should carefully avoid vanity or extravagance in dress.

The Israelites who were to receive the ten commandments from Sinai had to prepare themselves for three days for this solemn celebration, and gathered at the foot of the mountain dressed in holiday attire. In Holy Communion we receive more than they—we receive even the Son of God Himself.

Who are dispensed from the command of fasting before Holy Communion? Those dangerously ill, who receive the Blessed Sacrament as viaticum, i. e., as a preparation for their journey into eternity.

How should we approach the altar rail to receive Holy Communion?

With greatest reverence, our hands joined, and the eyes cast down. The demeanor of a person at the altar rail should express the reverence and respect with which he approaches his Lord and Saviour. Edification of our neighbor requires this external reverence, but still more the presence of the Son of God in the Sacrament. The clasped hands are an evidence of our piety, and the eyes cast down manifest our humility.

Before Holy Communion is distributed the server says the Confiteor, the priest gives general absolution and then says, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!" Then he says three times, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof," etc. After that Holy Communion is distributed.

If through an accident the Sacred Host should fall from the priest's hand, the communicant must on no account attempt to touch it, as only the consecrated hands of the priest may do this. When the priest approaches us we should hold the head erect, open the mouth and extend the tongue a little, so that the priest can conveniently lay the sacred particle upon the tongue. We should strive to swallow the Sacred Host at once and not keep it long in the mouth. We must not bite it with the teeth. Should it adhere to the

roof of the mouth, we must loosen it by movement of the tongue; never touch it with the finger.

An example of a worthy preparation for Holy Communion is given by St. Aloysius, who always devoted three days to the preparation for Holy Communion and three days in thanksgiving for the same. Let us seek during Holy Communion to arouse sentiments of adoration and love, of humility, of fervent gratitude, of lively faith in this adorable mystery.

What must we do after receiving Holy Communion? We retire with modesty to our seat, spend some time in devout prayer and pass the precious moments profitably by speaking to our divine Saviour.

What sort of prayers should especially be said after Holy Communion?

Those in which we humble ourselves before the Lord, thank Him, offer ourselves up to Him, express our love, and implore His grace. We return thanks for the least gift received from friends. How much more, then, should we not thank God for the greatest gift that He has given us! We should offer ourselves up to God, i. e., promise Him to be His entirely, and so to remain. We may make use of these words, "I am Thine, dear Jesus, in life and death." We should make acts of love of God, for has any one shown greater love for us than Jesus, who has given Himself to us? Real, true love, after all, does not consist in endearing and empty words, but in doing good for the sake of Jesus, avoiding evil, and patiently enduring sufferings and afflictions. That we may do all this, we must add to our prayers a petition for divine grace. Especially should we implore God that we may ever remain united with Jesus and never be separated from Him by sin. You will find suitable prayers for before and after Communion in your prayerbooks.

How should we pass the day on which we have received Holy Communion?

We should pass it as much as possible in devout contemplation and pious exercises, and avoid worldly pleasures and enjoyments. We should endeavor as much as possible to think of the divine Saviour dwelling in our hearts, and practise works of charity: give alms, visit the sick, etc.

Who is required to receive Holy Communion?

As a rule every Catholic having reached the age of discretion, after freeing himself of grievous sin which he may have committed. Formerly Holy Communion was given even to very young children.

Now, however, it is deemed better to let the children make their first Communion at the ages from ten to twelve. Holy Communion is not given to the insane, unless at a periodical moment of sanity. Neither can excommunicated persons or public sinners receive until they make good the public scandal they have given.

Why are the children carefully prepared for their first Communion?

Because the first Holy Communion is a most important act in a person's life, and because a worthy first Communion oftentimes preserves us from making subsequent unworthy Communions.

How often should the faithful receive?

The faithful should receive at least three times a year, on the principal festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost.

It is the fervent wish of Holy Mother Church that we should receive frequently and unite ourselves in the sacrament of love to Jesus Christ that we may attain to greater virtue and perfection.

Holy Communion is distributed upon every day in the year, except Good Friday. Cases of sickness or accident excepted, Holy Communion can be received only in the church.

Ought we to abstain from frequent Communion under the pretext that we are not worthy?

This is by no means a valid excuse. Even if we must consider ourselves unworthy to receive Jesus, we may not remain away from the Lord's table, for how can we possibly make progress in perfection if we do not receive Jesus and His grace? Make the resolution now to approach frequently the sacraments and to partake of the bread of angels worthily and devoutly. In Holy Communion we receive the most supreme good, the Son of God Himself. Frequently and fervently, therefore, should we go to Jesus, to unite ourselves with Him in the Sacrament of love. Fear not only an unworthy, but also a tepid Communion, and endeavor from one Communion to another to become more and more worthy of this priceless grace.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. How must we prepare ourselves for Holy Communion otherwise than seeking remission of mortal sins? We must endeavor: 1. To cleanse our souls also from venial sin; and 2. To excite in our hearts sentiments of fervor and devotion.

2. Who comes to visit us in Holy Communion? The Most Holy and the Most Pure, God Himself.

3. How ought we to receive Him? We ought to receive Him worthily.

4. Ought we to be satisfied with cleansing our souls in Confession from mortal sin? No; we should also cleanse our souls from venial sin.

5. Why? Because the purer our souls are, the greater is the grace we shall receive in Holy Communion.

6. Does venial sin render our Communion unworthy? Venial sin does not render it unworthy, but it diminishes the graces which would otherwise come to our souls.

7. To what are venial sins an obstacle? To an undivided surrender of oneself to God.

8. How can we excite sentiments of fervor and devotion in our hearts? By pious meditation and devout exercises.

9. What ought we particularly to meditate upon during Holy Communion? Upon the infinite love of Jesus for mankind.

10. If Jesus has so great a love for us, what ought to be our relations toward one another? We ought to love one another.

11. How should we prove this love for our fellow-men? By works of mercy and kindness.

12. What ought we to do on the day of Communion for instance? We should give alms, visit the sick, comfort the afflicted, etc.

13. Which are the best exercises before Holy Communion? (Answer as in lesson.)

14. Which is the first exercise recommended? The act of faith.

15. What must a Catholic believe in general? He must believe all that Jesus has revealed and the Holy Catholic Church proposes to him to be believed.

16. What must he especially believe concerning the Holy Eucharist? He must believe that Jesus is really and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament, as God and man.

17. How may we make an act of faith before receiving? In the following manner: "O my Jesus, I firmly believe all that Thou hast revealed, especially that Thou art really present in this Most Holy Sacrament, because Thou, the eternal, infallible Truth, hast so declared it."

18. What is the second exercise mentioned? The Act of Adoration.

19. With what words did Thomas adore the risen Saviour? With the words: "My Lord and my God!"

20. Which is the third exercise? The Act of Humility.

21. In what does humility consist? Humility consists in the appreciation of our unworthiness to receive Jesus.

22. How may we make an Act of Humility? With the words: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, but say only the word and my soul shall be healed!"

23. How did the Apostle Peter evince his humility upon one occasion? He said to Jesus: "Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man."

24. What is necessarily joined to the knowledge of our unworthiness? The feeling of contrition for the sins we have committed.

25. What, however, must be joined to this feeling of repentance? The virtue of hope.

26. How may you make an Act of Hope? "O my God, I hope with perfect confidence, through the merits of Jesus Christ, for all that is good for body and soul, forgiveness of my sins, thy holy grace in life and death, and eternal salvation."

27. If Jesus has so great a love for us, what ought we to have for Jesus? We also must have a great love for Jesus.

28. How may you make an Act of Love before Communion? "O my God, I love Thee with my whole heart, because Thou art my greatest benefactor, Thou hast created and redeemed me, Thou dost preserve me and lavish innumerable benefits upon me, and besides this, Thou wilt give me eternal happiness. O what return can I make for Thy love? In life and death I will love Thee, and none but Thee."

29. What further exercise should we make before Holy Communion? An Act of Desire.

30. How is this made? "Come, O Jesus, come and take possession of my heart; make it entirely Thine own. Come, my Jesus, come and visit me, and strengthen me with Thy grace."

31. How must we prepare ourselves as to the body? We must be fasting since midnight and be suitably dressed.

32. What should we avoid in our dress? All vanity, desire to attract attention, and extravagance.

33. When is the command to fast dispensed with? In the case of persons dangerously ill, who receive Holy Communion as Viaticum.

34. What is a Spiritual Communion? It is a fervent desire for the actual reception of Holy Communion.

35. How should we approach the altar rail to receive Holy Communion? With the greatest reverence, with hands joined, and eyes cast down.

36. What do the eyes cast down signify? Our profound humility.

37. What prayer precedes the distribution of Holy Communion? The server says the Confiteor, then the priest gives general absolution, and says the words: "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world," and then, three times: "O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but say only the word and my soul shall be healed."

38. If the Sacred Host should slip from the priest's fingers, who alone may touch it? Only the priest.

39. What ought we to do if the Sacred Host should adhere to the roof of the mouth? We ought to remove it with the tongue, but not with the fingers.

40. Who has given us an example of a most worthy Communion? St. Aloysius, who spent three days in preparation and three days in thanksgiving.

41. What sort of prayers ought we especially to say after Holy Communion? (Answer as in lesson.)

42. The first, therefore, is an Act of Humility. How may you make that? "O my Jesus, whence is this to me that Thou, my God, shouldst have vouchsafed to come to me, a poor sinner!"

43. Make an Act of Thanksgiving. "O my Saviour, I give Thee most fervent thanks for the inestimable grace of which I have been made partaker through receiving Holy Communion."

44. With what prayer may we offer ourselves to God? "O my Saviour and Redeemer, I offer to Thee my body, my soul, and all that I possess. All my thoughts, my desires, my words, and all that I do shall be Thine, shall be for Thee."

45. I have taught you how to make an Act of Love. How do we ask God for His grace? "O my Lord and my God, grant me, a poor creature, all the graces I stand in need of; for Thou art infinitely rich and infinitely good. O most bountiful Jesus, remain with me, with Thy grace strengthen and bless me, by virtue of this Holy Sacrament, now and at the hour of my death. Amen."

46. Who is required to receive Holy Communion? Every Catholic having reached the age of discretion, after having properly prepared himself.

47. To whom is Holy Communion not given? To excommunicated persons; that is, those excluded from the Church.

48. Why are children prepared most carefully for their first Communion? Because it is a most important turning point in the life of man.

49. How often should Holy Communion be received? At least three times a year, upon the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost.

50. Upon which day is Holy Communion not distributed? Upon Good Friday.

51. Under what pretext do many persons remain away from frequent Communion? Under the pretext that they are not worthy enough.

52. Is that a valid excuse? Certainly not; because we can not make progress in perfection unless we frequently receive Holy Communion.

53. What resolution should we make therefore? We should make the resolution to approach, frequently and worthily, the Lord's Table.

XIV.—The Sacrament of Penance.

In the last instructions we have spoken about the reception of Holy Communion and how the Christian must be worthily prepared by a good Confession for the reception of this Sacrament. I will, therefore, take up the subject of Confession and will explain to you the Sacrament of Penance.

What is the Sacrament of Penance?

It is that Sacrament in which the priest, by virtue and power of his office, forgives sins, provided the sinner is heartily sorry for them, sincerely confesses them, and is willing to perform the penance imposed upon him. By penance in general is understood repentance and sorrow, also the means of obtaining pardon for sins committed. Penance is also the name of the Sacrament instituted by Christ for the forgiveness of sins. If man would have steadfastly persevered in the state of grace received in Baptism, there would have been no need of the special Sacrament for the forgiveness of sins. However, Our Lord knew the frailty and weakness of man's nature, corrupted by original sin, and, therefore, He instituted the Sacrament of Penance, whereby those who fall into sin after Baptism may become justified.

The institution of this Sacrament is for us a most consoling fact, for the opportunity is offered of having the soul set free from the burden of sin.

The Catechism calls Penance a Sacrament, and with perfect right, for it was instituted by Christ, it has exterior signs, and it bestows inward grace.

Does the priest truly remit the sins, or does he only announce that they are remitted?

The priest does truly and really remit the sins in virtue of the power given to him by Christ.

The priest can not remit sins by his own power and authority, but he does so as the representative of Christ in obedience to the Lord's bidding to bind and loose, which privilege is imparted to him at his consecration as a priest. Jesus breathed upon His apostles before His ascension, as a sign that this power should pass over to them, for He said to them, "As the Father has sent me, so do I send you: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

To the priest thereby the authority of judge is transferred, that he may decide who shall receive the remission of their sins and who shall not. We must lay particular stress upon this fact, because the Protestants, departing from the true doctrine of the Catholic Church, teach that sins are not really blotted out, but merely forgotten by God, and, therefore, not punished. The Church meets this false doctrine and declares positively that the priest does really and truly remit sins, and that the sins so remitted are completely wiped out.

When did Christ give to His apostles and their successors the power of remitting sins?

He did it after His Resurrection, when He breathed upon the apostles and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

Did not Christ impart this power to the Apostles alone?

No; He imparted it also to all those succeeding the Apostles in the priesthood, as the Church has always believed and taught. The work of His redemption, as well as the Sacraments instituted by Him, were not to be the work of a brief period of time, but should endure until the end of the world. For this reason it is obvious that Jesus conferred the power to forgive sins, not only upon the apostles, but also upon their successors. The power to forgive sins was not a personal distinction granted to His apostles alone, but this power and the institution of the Sacrament of Penance was a manifestation of His love toward all men and an arrangement for the good of all mankind to last for all times. The priest receives jurisdiction, i. e., the power to rule, from the bishop. As the Pope has jurisdiction over the whole Church, so has the bishop jurisdiction over his diocese, the pastor over his parish. The priest must receive jurisdiction from the bishop authorizing him to hear confessions, and the priest receives this authority only for his own diocese, and not for any other, unless special faculties are granted.

Can all sins be forgiven by the Sacrament of Penance?

Yes; all the sins we have committed after Baptism can be forgiven, if we confess them with the necessary disposition of repentance.

Christ died for all men. God wills that all men should be saved; consequently Christ left to His Church the power to remit sin. When Holy Scripture says of certain sins that they will not be re-

mitted, this is not for lack of ecclesiastical authority, but only as a consequence of the great gravity of sin itself, which brings the sinner to oppose God's grace, and, therefore, makes his conversion so difficult that he is seldom saved. The indispensable condition for the forgiveness of sins is invariably that the sinner heartily repents of his sins, confesses them with sincerity and makes the resolution to amend and to make restitution. He who does not have the requisite dispositions of repentance can not make a valid confession.

This circumstance, that all sins can be forgiven, even the most grievous, imposes upon us a double obligation: 1. To thank God for this great grace; and, 2. Not to lose courage and hope of forgiveness when we have had the misfortune to commit grievous sin. While all sins can be remitted there are certain grievous sins that can not be remitted by every priest. These are what are called reserved cases, that is, cases left for decision to the bishop or the Pope. This is not a restriction of that power of the Church whereby she has the right and the power to forgive or remit all sins without exception, but only a restriction of priestly jurisdiction. And even in such reserved cases any priest may hear confession and give absolution for the reserved sins if there be danger of death, so anxious is our Holy Church to prevent the loss of souls.

Why must we confess our sins in order to have them forgiven?

Because Christ ordained it so when He instituted the Sacrament of Penance.

We prove this, 1, by His own words: "Whose sins you shall forgive," etc. Unless we declare and confess our sins, and lay bare the condition of our soul to the priest, he can not know whether, in virtue of the judicial power which God has conferred on him, he is to forgive or to retain our sins. Some may say that they confess in secret to God, but this is not sufficient. It is no doubt bitter and distasteful for some persons to reveal their numerous sins to the priest. In their case it is well to think of the maxim, If you were not ashamed to commit sin, you ought not to be ashamed to confess it.

2. Besides, the priest ought to know the spiritual condition of the penitent; this is only possible when the penitent reveals his faults. The priest is not only judge in confession, but also teacher and physician of the soul. If he is to render assistance, then the evils from which the penitent suffers must be made known to him.

3. At all times there has been a confession of sins, as demonstrated in the following examples:

a. Adam in paradise was required by God to confess his transgression.

b. In the Book of Proverbs it says, "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that shall confess, and forsake them, shall obtain mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13).

c. In the Old Law, for certain sins and transgressions certain sacrifices were prescribed as atonement. The Israelites, therefore, had to confess to their priests, who prescribed the corresponding sacrifice.

d. The apostles required confession. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all iniquity."

e. Confession was practised in the Church at all times since the apostles. This is testified to by the fact that some of the oldest Councils, as the Councils of Carthage, 397; of Angers, 453; of Rheims, 639, etc., made regulations for the hearing of confession.

Innumerable testimonies of the Fathers and Church historians, furthermore, prove that confession was considered essential, and that it was universally practised in the Church. Tertullian compares those who, from false shame, will not confess their sins, to sick persons who suffer and perish from a secret malady, because they will not speak of it to the physician.

St. Jerome says: "If the sick man is ashamed to discover the wounds of his soul to the physician, he can not be cured." Thus likewise St. Cyprian, St. Basil, St. Gregory the Great, and others.

f. The Sacrament of Penance is by its nature a most blessed institution, for it is the beginning of amendment. 1. Confession leads, through examination of conscience, to self-knowledge. 2. The severity of the tribunal of Penance frightens us from many sins. 3. The sinner is obliged to make restitution for what has been unjustly obtained, for slander, and other injuries to others.

Is, then, the Sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation to all those who have grievously sinned?

It is necessary for salvation to all those who have committed grievous sin after Baptism.

Holy Scripture itself says, "Nothing unclean can enter heaven." Those, therefore, who die burdened with grievous sin have no hope of entering heaven, for without possessing sanctifying grace we can not be heirs of heaven. As Baptism is necessary for all mankind, so Penance is necessary for all who have committed grievous sin after Baptism.

Considering the many dangers with which man is surrounded, and knowing that we may at any moment be called before the judgment seat of God, we should frequently receive the Sacrament of Penance. The Church, indeed, commands that the holy Sacrament of Penance should be received at least once a year (during Paschal time). But this commandment is only for those tepid persons who without it would probably not go to Confession at all, and good Christians are expected to approach the Sacrament of Penance several times a year.

Can the Sacrament of Penance be supplied by other means?

Under circumstances which render the receiving of the Sacrament of Penance impossible, it can be supplied by an act of supernatural and perfect contrition, and a firm resolution to confess our sins as soon as an opportunity offers.

The contrition required for this act must be a supernatural, perfect one, i. e., we must be contrite because we have offended God, whom we should love above all things. Should afterward confession become possible, it will be necessary to receive the Sacrament of Penance.

What are the effects of the Sacrament of Penance?

1. It remits the sins committed after Baptism.

2. It remits the eternal, and at least a part of the temporal, punishment due to our sins.

3. It restores, or increases, sanctifying grace; and,

4. It also confers other particular graces to enable us to lead a holy life.

1. The first effect of the Sacrament of Penance is, therefore, the remission of all sin committed after Baptism, mortal as well as venial sins.

2. With the forgiveness of sin is always united the remission of the eternal punishment. It is possible also that all temporal punishment is remitted in reward for our great sorrow and sincere penance.

3. The Sacrament of Penance imparts with the remission of mortal sin sanctifying grace, and with it anew the adoption of God and the heirship of heaven. Likewise the merits acquired in a former state of grace are made to live again, having died while we were in the state of sin. If we have not committed mortal sin, and, therefore, not lost sanctifying grace, the Sacrament of Penance will effect an increase of sanctifying grace in us. Grace is not imparted in the same measure to all, but according to the merit of our preparation.

4. The Sacrament of Penance grants still other graces, helping to a devout life. The sinner not only receives sanctifying grace again, but is also strengthened anew for the combat against sin, so that he may start a new and better life.

Hence with the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance is united a perceptible consolation, an inexpressible peace, interior happiness and confidence, and this in such a degree that sick persons are often favorably affected in their bodily condition by the reception of this Sacrament. If we have had the misfortune to commit grievous sin, we should not delay to receive the holy Sacrament of Penance. Those who would experience these effects in themselves must receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily, and to the worthy reception belong the following five points:

1. The Examination of Conscience; 2. Contrition; 3. Resolution of amendment; 4. Confession; and, 5. Satisfaction, of which we shall speak in our next instructions.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak in our last instruction? Of Holy Communion.

2. How ought we to receive Holy Communion? We ought to receive it worthily.

3. When do we receive worthily? When we are free from grievous sin.

4. Which Sacrament must we receive, if we are in mortal sin, in order to be free from sin? The Sacrament of Penance.

5. What is the Sacrament of Penance? (Answer as in lesson.)

6. What is understood by Penance in general? Repentance and sorrow, also the means of obtaining pardon for sins committed.

7. What is further understood by Penance? The punishment by which we atone for sins committed.

8. Why is this Sacrament necessary? Because man, inclined to evil, readily falls into sin.

9. Whence comes it that mankind has more inclination for evil than for good? It is a consequence of original sin.

10. Who remits sin? The ordained priest.

11. In whose place does he remit sin? In God's place.

12. Under what conditions? That the sinner is heartily sorry for his sins, sincerely confesses them, and has the earnest will to amend his life and to perform the penance imposed upon him.

13. The Catechism calls Penance a Sacrament; for what reason? Because we find in the Sacrament of Penance the essentials necessary to a Sacrament, namely: 1. An outward sign. 2. An invisible grace, and 3. The institution by Jesus Christ.

14. What outward sign do we notice in the Sacrament of Penance? The confession of sins and the absolution of the priest.

15. What is the inward grace? The remission of actual sin.

16. What are the words of institution of our divine Saviour? "As the Father hath sent me, so do I send you. Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

17. I will now ask a most important question: Does the priest truly remit the sins or does he only announce that they are remitted? (Answer as in lesson.)

18. For what reason does the Catechism ask this? Because Protestants teach differently.

19. What do they teach? They teach that our sins are only covered over, forgotten, not punished.

20. But what does the Catholic Church teach? She teaches that our sins are really and truly remitted.

21. How is it possible that a priest, who is only a human being, can forgive grievous offenses against God? In virtue of the power conferred upon him by Christ.

22. What is this power called? It is called the power to bind and to loose.

23. In what does the power to loose consist? It consists in the power to remit sins.

24. In what does the power to bind consist? The power to bind consists in retaining sins.

25. When is the power to bind and to loose conferred upon the priest? When he receives the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

26. To whom did Christ originally give the power to remit sins? To His apostles.

27. Did not Christ impart this power to the apostles for themselves only? No; He imparted it also to all those succeeding the apostles in the priesthood, as the Church has always believed and taught.

28. For whom did Jesus suffer and die upon the cross? For all mankind.

29. For whom did Jesus found His Church and institute His means of salvation? For all mankind.

30. How long was the Church which He founded to endure? Until the end of the world.

31. What is the conclusion? That the power conferred upon the apostles is to continue until the end of the world.

32. Can all sins, even the most grievous, be remitted? Yes; all sins can be forgiven, if the sinner heartily repents of them, confesses them, and makes the required reparation.

33. From what passage in Holy Writ can you prove this? "God wills that all men should be saved."

34. What are those cases called which can only be decided upon by the Pope or by the bishop? They are called reserved cases.

35. In what case may even a priest dispose of reserved cases? When there is danger of death.

36. Could we not also receive forgiveness of our sins by confessing them to God alone? No; because in that case the power which Christ has given to the priests of retaining or remitting them would be vain and useless.

37. Why is it necessary that the sinner should confess his sins to the priest? The priest is to be a counselor to the sinner, and it is necessary, therefore, that he should know exactly the spiritual condition of the sinner.

38. How is proof given that confession was in the Church from the earliest times? From the words of several Councils in the first centuries of Christianity.

39. To what does the institution of confession lead? To the knowledge of our faults, sins, and weaknesses.

40. Which part of the Sacrament leads to self-knowledge? The examination of conscience.

41. What do we learn in examining our conscience? The number and gravity of our sins.

42. What do we particularly learn to know? Our habitual sins.

43. To what does this self-knowledge lead? To the resolution to amend our life.

44. Is, then, the Sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation to all those who have sinned? It is necessary for salvation to all those who have committed grievous sin after baptism.

45. Whence do we know this? From Holy Scripture, which says that "Nothing unclean can enter into heaven."

46. Can the Sacrament of Penance never be supplied by other means? Under circumstances which make the reception of the Sacrament of Penance impossible, it can be supplied by perfect contrition, and a firm resolution to confess our sins as soon as an opportunity offers.

47. What are the effects of the Sacrament of Penance? (Answer as in lesson.)

48. Which is the first grace? God forgives us the sins committed after baptism.

49. Which sins are remitted by the Sacrament of Penance? Mortal sins, as also venial sins.

50. What else is connected with the forgiveness of sins? The remission of the eternal punishment and a part of the temporal.

51. How much of the eternal punishment is remitted? It is entirely remitted.

52. What is remitted of the temporal punishment? At least a part of the same.

53. How can the temporal punishment be wholly remitted? By great contrition and penance.

54. Whereby may we obtain the remission of all temporal punishment? By indulgences.

55. We shall learn more about this later. What do we further obtain by the Sacrament of Penance? We obtain again the sanctifying grace lost.

56. What do we become through sin? The enemies of God.

57. What did we lose by sin? The friendship and adoption of God.

58. What do we become again through the reception of the Sacrament of Penance? We are again made friends and children of God and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

59. But when we have not committed any grievous or mortal sins? Then sanctifying grace is increased in us.

60. In what measure is sanctifying grace imparted to us in the Sacrament of Penance? According to our worthiness and preparation.

61. What does the Sacrament of Penance further impart to us? It imparts to us other special graces for a devout life.

62. What are these particular graces? We are strengthened for the combat against evil and for growth in holiness; consolation, peace, and cheerfulness enter our hearts.

63. How must we receive this holy Sacrament? We must receive it worthily.

64. How many points belong to the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance? Five points.

65. What are they? (Answer as in lesson.)

In the next instruction we shall come to the explanation of the separate points which belong to the Sacrament of Penance.

XV.—The Examination of Conscience.

The first of the five points necessary for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance is the examination of conscience.

What is meant by examining our conscience? To examine our conscience means to meditate seriously upon our sins, in order that we may know them well.

The sinner in the sacred tribunal of Penance is not only the culprit, but he is his own accuser. The one who has to pronounce judgment upon him is the priest. This judgment, therefore, can only be right and the confession valid if the confession of the sinner is true. Confession presupposes the knowledge of our faults. The first thing for the sinner to do, after the grace of God has aroused and impelled him to penance, is to examine his conscience.

I will give you an illustration: One of the most complicated pieces of machinery is a watch. When the watchmaker is called upon to repair a broken watch he must, in order to find out what is wrong, take it apart and examine the contents minutely, and for this purpose he makes use of a magnifying glass. The sinner must be just as careful to obtain the knowledge of his faults. He must examine his heart, his every thought, wish and desire, he must account to himself for all his bad words and works, as well as for the omission of good, he must bring up before him all the duties he had to fulfil, so as to find out whether there has been a violation of any of them, and in what manner. Man, by examining his conscience, should learn to know himself and his faults, as well as the entire condition of his soul, in order that through the knowledge of the number and magnitude of his sins he may be moved to contrition. If he has never been to confession, then he must examine his conscience from the time of his baptism or when he began to know sin. If he has been to confession before, then he must examine his conscience from the last valid confession.

How should we begin the examination of conscience?

By imploring the assistance of the Holy Ghost, that He may give us the grace rightly to know, to repent of, and to confess our sins. As we need for every good work the blessing of God, so should the first step which the sinner takes on the path to penance be to implore the assistance of the Holy Ghost, that He may enlighten him. When we look for a lost article in the dark we fetch a light, so as to

be able to look more carefully. The spiritual light of our conscience is the grace of the Holy Ghost. St. Basil rightly observes, "Nothing is harder than to know oneself." Without the assistance of the Holy Ghost we should not be able to know our failings, nor to regard them as sins and offenses against God. Not only our understanding and intellect requires divine grace, but also our will, so that we may detest evil with our whole soul and make the steadfast resolution to renounce it. The examination of conscience, therefore, must begin with prayer, with the invocation of the Holy Ghost.

How do we implore the assistance of the Holy Ghost?

With these words, or others, as you may find them in your prayer-book, "Come, O Holy Ghost! enlighten my understanding, that I may rightly know my sins: and move my heart, that I may properly repent of them, sincerely confess them, and truly amend my life."

In what manner should we examine our conscience?

1. We should first of all inquire when it was that we last made a good confession, and whether we performed the penance then imposed upon us; and,

2. We should go through the Commandments of God and of the Church, through the obligations of our state of life, and also through the different kinds of sin, carefully examining in what way and how often we have offended God by thought, word, action, and omission.

When, therefore, we have been to confession before, we must examine when we last went to confession and whether the confession was a good one, i. e., whether we examined our conscience properly, and had true contrition and an earnest resolution, whether we deliberately omitted to mention a grievous sin, whether we have performed the penance imposed and made restitution for injury occasioned by our sins. If one or more confessions were not valid, then we must examine our conscience as far back as the last good confession. If, however, without fault of ours, we have omitted a grievous sin, we have only to mention that sin and the fact that we had forgotten to confess it; the confession was not invalid on that account. Then, in thought we should go through the Commandments of God and of the Church, by asking ourselves at each Commandment whether we have sinned against it in thought, word, and work, or through any omissions. A good confession presupposes, of course, a thorough knowledge of God's Commandments and those of the Church, and the duties of our state of life, as well as an exact knowledge of how we have sinned against the same.

How may we facilitate this examination?

By examining our conscience every day, and by going frequently to confession. The daily examination of conscience may take place at night before going to sleep. It is to the sinner's own interest not to remain away too long from confession. No one can tell in the evening whether he will be alive the next morning. Neither is it known to us whether the manner of our death will be such that we shall be able to repent of our sins and confess them.

Furthermore, it is a good thing to remember where we have been and in whose company. You children are often at home with your parents. What sins do you commit against them? Do you not obey them at times, or do you do so unwillingly? Do you take money secretly from your parents? Do you lie to them? Do you deride and ridicule them, or do you get angry at them when receiving a merited punishment? Are you rude and ill-tempered to your brothers and sisters?

You go to the house of God, to the church. There you know how irreverently some of you behave, how you talk and laugh, push one another, get distracted at your prayers, and how, when the word of God is being preached and instructions given, you have thought of other things. Then, in school. What sins do you commit there? Some children are disrespectful and impudent to the teacher, ill-mannered toward other children. Some children are even bad enough to steal small articles from classmates, as, for instance, pencils, pens, and other things.

In this way you examine your consciences, and if you take the necessary care and are really earnest about it, it is not likely that you will omit a grievous sin.

Must we also examine ourselves on the number and circumstances of our sins?

Yes; at least when they are mortal sins.

We must add the circumstances because they often render a mortal sin more grievous. For example, a person ill-uses his mother, but confesses merely, I have ill-treated somebody, although the fact that it was his own mother makes the sin a greater one. A person says simply, "I have stolen," when he has really stolen a chalice from the church, which makes the theft a more serious crime. Circumstances, therefore, may greatly increase the sin.

Against what faults are we to guard in the examination of conscience?

1. We must not examine ourselves hastily and superficially; 2. We must not try and conceal our favorite sins from ourselves; and, 3. We must not become too scrupulous.

Some people treat the examination of conscience very easily. They give but a few minutes to it, even if they may not have been to confession for a year. They are satisfied if they know some sin or another. This is an inexcusable, culpable, and sinful laxity. Others, on the contrary, torment themselves for hours and days, making the examination a torture. They run the danger of neglecting other parts of the Sacrament because of their excessive scrupulousness in examining their conscience. Some people examine themselves about all their faults, but just their favorite faults they do not appreciate, and conceal them from themselves by self-deception. We should carefully avoid all these faults in examining our conscience. In order not to examine our conscience hurriedly and superficially, we should take proper time, and the necessary diligence and zeal. Exactly how much time we should take for this purpose can not be determined. Those who frequently go to confession every week or fortnight need not be so long in examining their conscience as those who go only at rare intervals, or even only once a year. The longer, therefore, we have not been to confession, the more duties we have had to fulfil, the more godless we have lived, the more time we should take to examine our conscience. God requires of us nothing more than zeal and diligence in the examination of our conscience, and no more than we are capable of doing. This applies also to the sick persons who, on account of their weakness, find the examination of conscience difficult.

St. Ignatius recommends examining the conscience at least once each day at night. How careful people are in regard to their temporal affairs, how minutely they make up their accounts! And how much more solicitous we should be concerning the affairs of our conscience, as we may be required at any time to appear before the judgment seat of God.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is the first one of the five points necessary for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance? The examination of conscience.

2. Why must the sinner examine his conscience? Because the sinner must accuse himself in the tribunal of Penance.

3. What does it mean to examine our conscience? It means to reflect earnestly upon our sins, so that we may know them well.

4. To whom must the penitent accuse himself? To the priest.

5. When is the priest alone able to pronounce a right sentence? When the penitent's accusation is true and complete.

6. What must, therefore, precede the accusation on the penitent's part? The knowledge of his transgressions.

7. How does the penitent obtain this knowledge? By examining his conscience.

8. How should the sinner reflect upon his sins? Seriously and attentively.

9. What should we recall to our memory? All the sins that we have committed by thought, word, deed, or omission since our last valid confession.

10. From what time should we examine our conscience? If we have already been to confession, then we must examine our conscience from the last time we made a good confession; but if it is our first confession we must go back to the time of our baptism, or to the time when we began to know what was allowed and prohibited, good and evil.

11. To what does the knowledge of the number and magnitude of our sins lead? To contrition.

12. How must we begin the examination of conscience? By imploring the assistance of the Holy Ghost, for without His grace we can neither know our sins rightly nor repent and confess them, as it is necessary for our salvation.

13. With what should we begin every good work? We should begin every good work with the blessing of God.

14. Whom, then, do we invoke before the examination of conscience? The Holy Ghost.

15. For what do we implore Him? 1. To enlighten our understanding. 2. To move our hearts.

16. What says St. Basil of the examination of conscience? He says: "There is nothing more difficult than to know oneself."

17. What should the Holy Ghost work in us? He should work: 1. That we know our sins. 2. That we recognize them as offenses against God, repent them with our whole heart, and resolve to amend our life.

18. In what manner should we examine our conscience? 1. We should recall to mind when we last made a good confession, and whether we performed the penance then laid upon us. 2. We should go through the commandments of God and the Church, and through the obligations of our state of life, the different kinds of sin, carefully examining in what way and how often we have offended God by thought, word, action, and omission.

19. Why must we remember when we made our last good confession? Because unworthy confessions must be made over again if we hope for pardon.

20. What should we do when remembering a sin that was omitted in a previous confession, but not purposely? Mention it in our next confession.

21. How can we facilitate the examination of conscience? By making it every day, and by going frequently to confession.

22. When should the daily examination take place? When saying our night prayers.

23. What should we ask ourselves? "What evil have you done to-day? Have you omitted good? What would happen to you if God were to call you from the world and judge you?"

24. What advantage would this examination have? It would contribute greatly to the amendment of our lives.

25. If we go to confession often we should not have to exert greatly our memory at the examination of conscience, as we should have to do if we

only went rarely. How may we facilitate the examination of conscience still further? By recalling where we have been, and in what company.

26. How should children conduct themselves in church? Modestly and devoutly.

27. How should children behave in school? They should be attentive, quiet, willing, diligent, and obedient to their teachers.

28. How should children behave toward their parents? They should respect, love, and obey them.

29. It is not sufficient in examination of conscience to know what sins we have committed. We must also remember something else, for instance? We must examine our conscience as to the number and circumstances of our sins.

30. What means: As to the number? I must know how many times I have committed a sin.

31. Concerning what circumstances must we examine our conscience? Concerning those which increase a sin.

32. A bad son has ill-treated his own mother, but says simply at confession, "I have ill-treated some one." What has he omitted? He has omitted a circumstance which considerably increases the sin.

33. A person rifles the poor box in church and mentions merely, "I have stolen." What has he omitted? A circumstance which renders the sin more grievous.

34. A thief steals the last loaf of bread from a poor widow. This is another circumstance which greatly augments the sin.

35. A person swears a false oath, in consequence of which another suffers a loss of money. What about that? That is a circumstance which makes the mortal sin of swearing falsely still more grievous.

36. Against what faults are we to guard in the examination of conscience? 1. We must not examine ourselves hastily and superficially. 2. We must not be too scrupulous. 3. We must not conceal our favorite sins from ourselves.

37. How much time ought we to employ in the examination of conscience? This can not be decided upon as a general rule.

38. What persons require more time in the examination of their conscience? 1. Those who for a long while have not been to confession. 2. Those who have more obligations to fulfil, and 3. Those who lived a godless life.

39. What other faults must we avoid in examining our conscience? Scrupulosity.

40. When is a person scrupulous whilst examining the conscience? When he torments himself for fear that he may not know all his sins.

41. And yet, it is always better to be too careful than careless. To which faults should we pay particular attention? To habitual sins—our favorite sins.

42. Which are some favorite or habitual sins of bad children? Idleness, lying, laziness, disobedience, and other faults.

I will conclude the explanation of the examination of conscience, and I will exhort you to employ the greatest care in the examination of your consciences, for only in this way can you thoroughly repent of your sins and confess them. I exhort you particularly to examine your consciences every night. Above your bed there should hang a crucifix or picture of the crucified Saviour, who suffered so much for your sins. This should exhort you to desist from a sinful life, and move you to examine your conscience before going to sleep, to repent of your sins, and to make good resolutions for a better life.

XVI.—Contrition.

The second condition for a worthy confession is contrition.

What is contrition?

Contrition is a sincere sorrow for our sins, and a detestation of them, with a firm purpose not to sin again. After the sinner has examined his conscience with the assistance of divine grace, and has recognized rightly the number and gravity of his sins, he must, through faith and divine grace, be led to contrition. This is a necessary element of the Sacrament of Penance, because without contrition no forgiveness of sins is possible, whilst a supernatural, perfect contrition can supply for confession in case of need.

Contrition comprises three things, as we have just heard. They are: 1. A sorrow of the soul; 2. A detestation of our sins; and, 3. A resolution not to sin again. It comprises also a resolution for amendment. Sorrow alone is not contrition. Contrition is a sorrow of the soul arising from the knowledge of sin being an offense against God, united to a true hatred and detestation of sin. It contains not only the firm purpose of not sinning again, but also a hatred of past sins. Contrition, in the actual sense of the word, means grinding, crushing. Contrition of the soul means, therefore, that in acknowledgment of its many faults it feels itself crushed under the weight of guilt. "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou will not despise" (Ps. l. 19).

The Prophet Joel warns: "Rend your hearts, and not your garments" (ii. 13).

Contrition must produce an entire change of disposition in man. That which he loved formerly (sin) he must henceforth hate, and what until now he has hated (the good God) he must love in the future. Contrition, therefore, is the beginning of a new life. This can only take place with the help of divine grace. Only with the grace of God can man really renounce the idols he formerly served, the sins of the flesh and the pride of life.

Contrition brings with it hope of forgiveness, for as God in His justice punishes the unrepentant sinner, so in His goodness and mercy He pardons the contrite sinner. Such was the contrition of Magdalene, who bathed the feet of Jesus with tears of penitence;

of Peter, who bitterly bewailed his denial of Jesus, and of the humble publican in the Temple.

What qualities must contrition possess that our sins may be forgiven?

These three qualities: It must be, 1. Interior; 2. Universal; and, 3. Supernatural.

How must contrition be interior?

We must not merely grieve for our sins in words, but we must also detest them in our heart as the greatest evil, and sincerely wish we had not committed them.

Interior is the opposite of exterior. Our contrition is exterior if we show sorrow merely with our lips or eyes, whilst our heart is not moved. Interior contrition consists not merely in exterior penitential tears, sighs, and other works of penance, but in the detestation of the will for all sin. St. Augustine says: "The tear of penance is only a daughter of contrition." Whether contrition has been true and interior will be proved by our entering on a better life.

How must contrition be universal? We must have sorrow for all the sins we have committed, or at least for all mortal sins. If, therefore, a person repents of some mortal sins, but not of others, contrition is not universal, and his sins are not forgiven. For the validity of confession it is sufficient to repent of the mortal sins committed, but the confession is null when only some mortal sins are repented of and not all. It is self-evident that we should take the greatest pains in preparing ourselves for confession in order to arouse in our hearts a sincere and true contrition for all the sins committed.

If a penitent has no sorrow for his venial sins, would his confession be nevertheless valid?

If he has to confess venial sins only, and is not truly sorry for at least one of them, his confession is null.

If, then, we confess our sins, without true repentance, a most essential part is lacking, and our confession is null. Not only do we not receive the forgiveness of our sins, but we commit a new mortal sin—a sacrilege. Whoever has true contrition will repent all his sins without exception.

How must contrition be supernatural? The sorrow for our sins must arise not from the consideration of their natural evil consequences, but from supernatural motives; namely, because we have offended God, lost His grace, deserved hell, etc.

If a thief repents of his sin only because he has brought imprisonment upon himself, then his contrition is merely natural. If the prodigal only repents of his sins because they have reduced him to poverty and misery; if the murderer repents of his awful deed only because he must suffer for it with his life; if the worldling only repents of his sinful excesses because he has brought upon himself infirmity and disease, their repentance is merely natural, and as such has no value for the forgiveness of sins. Contrition, therefore, is natural when it has reference only to natural things, or when it arises from natural motives. Our contrition must be supernatural, i. e., it should have reference to God. Supernatural contrition arises from faith and love of God.

Sorrow for our sins on account of their natural consequences has no value for the salvation of our soul. Those who have only a natural contrition may nevertheless remain hardened in enmity toward God. What then should we do in order to obtain supernatural contrition? We should: 1. Earnestly ask God for His grace, and 2. We should seriously call to our mind what faith teaches us concerning the malice of sin and its supernatural consequences. Supernatural contrition is something which man can not give himself, but it must come from God; therefore, we must pray to God for it. Holy Scripture says: "Ask and ye shall receive."

How many kinds of supernatural contrition are there? Two: Perfect contrition and imperfect contrition, both of which have the qualities already enumerated, interior, universal, and supernatural.

Supernatural contrition may then be of two kinds, perfect and imperfect. As man may fulfil his obligations from the desire to gain heaven or from pure love of God, the Supreme Good, so also can our supernatural contrition be of two kinds, a perfect one and an imperfect one.

When is contrition perfect? When it arises from perfect love, i. e., when we detest sin more than all other evils, for the reason that it offends God, the Supreme Good.

When is contrition imperfect? When our love is not perfect, and when, therefore, our fear of hell and of the loss of heaven, or our sense of the heinousness of sin itself, causes us to detest sin and to resolve to offend God no more.

Our good works are most pleasing to God when we practise them from pure love of Him.

Perfect contrition does not, indeed, exclude less perfect motives,

but it rises above them, has not them in view, but solely and alone the love of God, so that the soul no longer thinks of the loss of heaven, of the punishments of hell, etc., but only of God, whom it loves, and has offended by sin. It forgets itself, as it were, not thinking of its fate, but only of God, the object of its love. This one perfect motive is in itself strong enough to impel it to detest sin above all things, and it does not require the hope of heaven nor the fear of hell.

To attain a perfect love and contrition we should ponder how much God deserves to be loved by us, His goodness, His infinite perfections, and how we, through sin, have despised His love and driven Him from our hearts. Although this contrition out of perfect love of God is the most exalted and best, yet the imperfect contrition is in no wise to be rejected, but is good and wholesome, because it also makes us beware of sin. It is not called imperfect because it is defective or not a supernatural contrition, but it is called imperfect only as compared with the more exalted perfect contrition, and because it has not the power to liberate from sin without the Sacrament of Penance, as perfect contrition has. Even supernatural imperfect contrition is good, for the Saviour Himself exhorts us to be afraid of the punishments of sin: "Fear those who have the power to plunge body and soul into hell."

It is salutary because it really makes us afraid of eternal punishment. To be sure, this fear ought not to be a servile one, which merely dreads the punishment but not the guilt. Hence St. Augustine says: "He who sins not, merely for fear of hell, is not afraid of sinning, but of burning in hell; he would do what ought not to be done, but he does not do it because it can not be safely done." To fear there must always be united the love of God; at least, the beginning of love. This fear, therefore, must be a filial one, i. e., of a kind which fears not alone the punishment, but also the sin and guilt, because they offend God and deserve His punishment. Must contrition necessarily be perfect? It is not necessary for the remission of sin that we should have perfect contrition, we should, however, strive to obtain it.

According to the decision of the Church at the Council of Trent, imperfect contrition suffices for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance. But in case of danger, when confession is impossible, imperfect contrition does not suffice to supply for the Sacrament of Penance, for this purpose a perfect contrition is needed.

Certainly it is not always easy to awaken perfect contrition. Nevertheless we should at all times strive to arouse a perfect contrition.

Why should we strive to awaken perfect contrition? Because the more perfect our contrition is, the more is our repentance meritorious and acceptable to God, and the more certainly it obtains pardon. The greater and more thorough our contrition is, the more gladly will God forgive us, the easier we shall obtain the remission of temporal punishment for sin, and receive more strength from God to amend our lives. St. Gregory says: "The rust of sin disappears the more completely the greater the fire of love burns within our hearts."

The more perfect our contrition is, the greater will be the consolation and peace we shall obtain in holy Confession. St. Chrysostom says: "In the same way as after a shower of rain the air appears clear and pure, so also is our spirit, peaceful, pure, and clear after the rain shower of contrition."

When should we make an act of perfect contrition, even outside of the Sacrament of Penance? 1. In danger of death; and, 2. As often as we have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin and can not immediately go to confession.

As perfect contrition can supply for the Sacrament of Penance in a case of necessity, we should in such case not fail to make an act of perfect contrition. We should do this also if possible at the hour of death and during a dangerous illness. Further, also, when attacked by temptation to sin. Those who reflect upon the hideousness and the consequences of mortal sin will more easily be able to avoid it. He who examines his conscience every night should also ask contrition for having offended his Lord and God. We are at every moment in God's hands, and He may, during any time, night or day, call us from this life.

When must we make the act of contrition in the Sacrament of Penance? We must make it before our confession, or at least before the priest gives us absolution. The penitent is required to make a contrite confession of his sins, at the same time he should have contrition for his sins before confession.

Can contrition ever be supplied for in case of necessity? No; contrition is so necessary that it can not be supplied for by anything or under any conditions. Contrition is indispensably necessary for every one for the remission of mortal sins committed after baptism for the obtaining of eternal salvation.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of contrition.

2. What is contrition? Contrition is a hearty sorrow for our sins, a detestation of them, and a resolve to sin no more.

3. Whence arises contrition? What is its origin? Contrition arises from the knowledge and appreciation of our sins.

4. How did I describe contrition? As a most important part of the Sacrament of Penance.

5. Why is this? Because without contrition the sinner can not obtain forgiveness of his sins.

6. What does contrition include in itself? It includes three things, namely: 1. A sorrow of the soul. 2. A detestation of sin. 3. A resolution to sin no more.

7. What else does contrition include in itself? The hope of forgiveness.

8. Is sorrow of soul itself contrition? No; sorrow alone is not contrition.

9. What must be united to contrition? A detestation of sin and a resolution to avoid sin.

10. What ought contrition to produce in us? A complete change of heart.

11. In what way? That what we formerly loved, sin, we must now detest, and what we formerly hated, God, we must henceforth love.

12. Is this an easy or a difficult task? It is a difficult task.

13. Why ought we to hope for forgiveness? Because God is as merciful and kind as He is just.

14. Which passage of Scripture expresses this? "God wills not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."

15. What persons have had this true contrition, for instance? Magdalene, the penitent sinner; Peter, the apostle, and the publican in the Temple.

16. What qualities must contrition have that our sins may be forgiven? It must be: 1. Interior. 2. Universal, and 3. Supernatural.

17. How must contrition be interior? We must not merely grieve for our sins in words, etc. (As in lesson.)

18. What is the opposite of interior contrition? Interior is the opposite of exterior, and to interior contrition the opposite is exterior contrition.

19. When is our contrition an exterior one? When we repent of our sins merely with our lips, and behave exteriorly as though we were sorry for our sins.

20. Are exterior signs, like tears, for instance, always a sure proof that a person is profoundly sorry for sin? No; it may be hypocrisy.

21. When is repentance true and sincere? When an amendment of life follows it.

22. How must contrition be universal? We must be sorry for all mortal sins committed.

23. If a person repents of some mortal sins only, but not others, what about this contrition? It is not universal, and therefore not sufficient.

24. Can forgiveness be obtained with such partial contrition? No; it can not.

25. If we had no contrition for our venial sins, would our confession be still good? If we have only venial sins to confess, and are not truly contrite for at least one of them, then our confession is null.

26. What about the penitent who confesses without contrition? He commits a sacrilege.

27. When is contrition supernatural? When we are sorry for our sins not on account of their natural consequences, as loss of health, property, reputation, but on account of supernatural things, loss of heaven, loss of the love of God.

28. What are some natural consequences of sin? Disgrace, sickness, poverty.

29. When is our contrition supernatural? When it has reference to God and supernatural things (heaven and hell).

30. What consequences has sin in regard to God? God is offended thereby.

31. What are the sources from which springs supernatural contrition? Faith and love.

32. What tells us, for instance, that there is a heaven and a hell? Faith tells us.

33. What moves us not to offend the good God? Love.

34. Is a merely natural contrition sufficient for the forgiveness of sins? No; it is not sufficient.

35. As a supernatural contrition is necessary for the forgiveness of our sins, what ought we to do to obtain it? We should beg God fervently for His grace, etc. (As in lesson.)

36. From whom does all good for body and soul come? From God.

37. From whom, therefore comes supernatural contrition? It comes from God.

38. May we also hope to receive the grace of supernatural contrition? Yes; we may so hope, because the promise has been given: "Ask and ye shall receive."

39. How many kinds of supernatural contrition are there? Two: perfect and imperfect contrition.

40. When is contrition perfect? (Answer as in lesson.)

41. Whence, therefore, arises the supernatural, perfect contrition? It arises from perfect love, which fears to offend God.

42. For what two supernatural reasons can we be induced to do good and to fulfil our duties? 1. For love of heaven, for eternal reward. 2. For pure love of God, the Supreme Good.

43. When is our contrition imperfect? (Answer as in lesson.)

44. When are our good works most pleasing to God? When we do them not for the sake of reward, but out of love of God.

45. Of whom does man think who has perfect contrition? He thinks only of God, not of himself.

46. What means did I mention for the obtaining of perfect contrition? We should consider how much God deserves to be loved, His goodness, and His infinite perfection.

47. Is, then, imperfect supernatural contrition to be rejected? No; it is useful and salutary.

48. If it is useful and salutary, why is it called imperfect? It is only called so in comparison with the more exalted perfect love, and then because it has not the power (in danger of death) to liberate us from sin without the Sacrament of Penance, as perfect contrition does.

49. Of what kind ought our fear of sinning be? It should not be servile, but a filial fear, which dreads to offend God.

50. Must contrition be necessarily perfect? (Answer as in lesson.)

51. Why should we strive to awaken a perfect supernatural contrition? Because the more perfect our contrition is, the more it is meritorious and pleasing to God, and the more certain of obtaining forgiveness.

52. When should we make an act of perfect contrition outside of the Sacrament of Penance? When in danger of death and when we have had the misfortune to commit a mortal sin and can not at once go to confession.

53. At what other time should we make an act of perfect contrition? When retiring at night.

54. When must we make the act of contrition in the Sacrament of Penance? We should make it before entering the confessional or at least before the priest gives us absolution.

55. Can contrition be supplied for by anything else? No; contrition is so necessary that it can not be supplied for under any circumstances.

56. For whom, then, is contrition necessary? For every one who would obtain pardon for mortal sins committed after baptism.

XVII.—The Resolution of Amendment.

We have learned in our last instruction that contrition must include the good resolution to sin no more and to amend our lives. But there must be present also the hope of forgiveness, otherwise man, with the knowledge of the number and magnitude of his sins, would despair. If confession would mean for us only a cleansing from sin, without the determination to sin no more, then there is no true contrition and no good resolution of amendment.

What is a resolution of amendment? It is a sincere determination to amend our life and to sin no more. Whilst contrition is more a matter of the heart, the resolution of amendment is an act of the will. This resolution must be sincere; we must earnestly intend to change our lives and to become better Christians. The more sins become habitual, the more difficult it is to cease committing them.

What qualities must our resolution of amendment have? The resolution must be: 1. Interior or sincere. 2. Universal; and 3. Supernatural. Interior, as you have already heard, is the opposite of exterior. Our good resolution is merely exterior when it is made only with the lips, the heart taking no part in it. Our resolution must also be a determined one. Earnestness is the opposite of levity. The resolution of amendment must be earnestly meant, so that we may not deceive ourselves, but resolve honestly to employ the means to amendment, energetically and effectually, so that it will really induce us to observe these means faithfully. To be sure, there will still arise the apprehension that perhaps we shall relapse again into sin, but if we are honestly determined to do our very best to avoid sin and amend our lives, we have the necessary resolution of amendment. We must in this regard never forget that of ourselves we can do nothing, but we can do all things with the help of divine grace. In order to make a determined resolution and to keep it, we should renew it every day at our morning and night prayers, and at the examination of conscience we should ask ourselves as to whether we have kept our resolution or not.

Our resolution must be universal, i. e., it must include all sins. If one addicted to drink, for example, would resolve to renounce all sin except drunkenness, his resolution would not be universal.

Our resolution must also be supernatural. The supernatural

motives which should move us to contrition, love of God, loss of heaven, the punishments of hell, must also produce the resolution of amendment. Our resolution would arise from natural motives if we, for instance, determine to avoid sin so as not to injure our health, or to escape punishment by law, etc.

What will he be determined to do who forms a proper resolution of amendment? He will be determined: 1. To avoid at least all mortal sins, as well as the occasions of sin. 2. To use the means necessary for amendment. 3. To make due reparation for whatever injury he may have done to his neighbor by his sins. The sinner must be determined at least to avoid all mortal sin, for sin is the greatest evil upon earth, inasmuch as it sunders the union between God and man, and draws down upon the sinner the punishments of God.

Furthermore, our resolution must extend to the near occasions of sin. By these are meant the person, company, amusement, place, where and whereby we are generally tempted and led to sin. For children the most frequent occasion of sin is idleness, hence the proverb: "Idleness is the beginning of every vice." Grown people are threatened with danger to sin, for instance, in dance halls, saloons, etc. Company where tale bearing, calumnies, and defamation are indulged in should be avoided, also where modesty and good morals are not observed. Should we be unable to avoid the near occasion of sin, then we must be at least most careful that we are not overcome by temptation. Prayer is one of the best means for amending our lives, for temptation is sometimes strong and we are but weak and unable to do anything without God's help. Therefore we should often pray and frequently make the resolution so to live as the thought of God's omniscience and omnipresence requires of us. Our resolution must further be directed to the repairing of any injury we may have caused to others. We must (a) restore or otherwise repair whatever injury our neighbors' property has received through us, and (b) make good any reputation that has suffered at our hands. If we are unable to make restitution at once, we must have the earnest intention to do so as soon as possible. What should they consider who will not avoid the near occasion or will not desist from their habitual sins? That the priest's absolution will be of no avail to them, but will aggravate their guilt. For the validity of absolution it is always necessary that the essential points of the Sacrament of Penance, the good resolution included, be

present. If the good resolution to avoid sin is lacking our sins can not be remitted. He who has not the firm resolution of renouncing his sins makes an unworthy and invalid confession and increases his guilt by sacrilege.

How can we make an act of contrition together with a resolution of amendment? In this manner, for instance: "O my God, from the bottom of my heart I am sorry for all my sins; not only because by them I have rendered myself unworthy of Thy grace and liable to Thy just punishment in this life and in the next, but especially because I have offended Thee, the Sovereign, Most Perfect and Most Amiable Good, whom I now love above all things. I hate and detest all my sins, and am firmly resolved nevermore to offend Thee, my most amiable God, and carefully to avoid all occasion of sin."

Now a prayer like that should not be merely an empty formula, but we should mean it in earnest. God grants us many graces, and reminds us in so many ways of death and of the hereafter. But all this is good for our salvation only when we live up to the resolution to amend our lives and become better Christians.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of the firm purpose of amendment and of the hope for forgiveness.

2. Why must the hope of forgiveness be united to contrition? Because otherwise the sinner would despair.

3. What would drive him to this? The number and enormity of his sins.

4. Why may the sinner believe that all his sins, even the most grievous, can be forgiven, if he has a supernatural contrition? Because God has promised forgiveness to the contrite sinner.

5. In which passage of Scripture is this found? "God wills not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."

6. What must necessarily be united to contrition? The resolution of amendment.

7. What is the resolution of amendment? It is a sincere determination to amend our life and to sin no more.

8. Whence arises the good resolution? From true contrition.

9. If a person really and truly repents of his sins, what will he resolve to do? He will resolve to sin no more.

10. In what does the good resolution differ from contrition? Contrition is a matter of the heart, the good resolution is an act of the will.

11. About what should we be thoroughly in earnest? About amending our lives and avoiding sin and the near occasion of it.

12. What must be the qualities of our resolution of amendment? Like our contrition, it must be: 1. Interior, or sincere. 2. Universal, and 3. Supernatural.

13. What is the opposite of interior? Exterior.

14. When is our resolution exterior? When it is made with the lips only, the will taking no part therein.

15. Our resolution should also be earnest. What is the opposite of earnestness? Levity.

16. When is the resolution earnest? When the sinner does not endeavor to deceive himself.

17. What should we do in order not to forget our good resolution? We should renew it frequently during the day.

18. When ought we to do this especially? Every morning and night.

19. About what should we examine ourselves at night? As to whether we have kept our resolutions.

20. How must our resolution be universal? The sinner must resolve to renounce all sins without exception.

21. Give an example. A drunkard may renounce every sin, but not that of drunkenness. His resolution would be insufficient.

22. How must our resolution be supernatural? The same supernatural motives which move us to contrition must call forth our good resolution.

23. What are these supernatural motives? 1. The love of God. 2. The desire of gaining heaven, and 3. Fear of hell.

24. What must he be determined to do who forms a proper resolution of amendment? (Answer as in lesson.)

25. What, therefore, must he first of all be determined to do? He must be determined to avoid at least all mortal sins, as well as the near occasions of sin.

26. To what must our good resolution also be directed? To the near occasions of sin.

27. What, for instance, presents to children a great opportunity to sin? Idleness.

28. What is the proverb concerning idleness? Idleness is the beginning of all vice.

29. What, then, must children shun if they would avoid the near occasion of sin? Idleness.

30. What offers the most frequent opportunity of sinning to grown persons? Idleness, bad company, dancing halls, and other places.

31. How does the Catechism describe the near occasion? By near occasion is understood a person, company, amusement, a place, when or whereby we are usually tempted and led to sin.

32. When, however, we can not avoid the near occasion, what ought we to do? We must be very careful lest sin overcome us.

33. What places in general must we avoid so as to escape the near occasion? Those places where we see wickedness, hear it, and learn it.

34. What company should we avoid? Company where defamation of character, calumnies to the injury of our neighbor are customary, or where immodesty prevails.

35. How firm should our resolution of amendment be? It should be so firm that we are determined to die rather than to fall into sin again.

36. What means have I particularly recommended to you for your amendment? Prayer. Prayer is the bond, the chain, which binds man to God; it reminds us of our eternal destiny, heaven, and warns us also of everything

that might cause us to lose heaven. Prayer also obtains for us the help and assistance of God to keep our resolutions. In time of temptation, long prayers are not necessary, we need only say the Christian salutation: "Praised be Jesus Christ."

37. To what should our resolution still further extend? We should have the earnest desire to repair whatever injury we have caused by sin.

38. In what way may we injure our neighbor? We may injure his honor, his life, his health, his person, his property, etc.

39. How should we strive to restore our neighbor's good name if injured by us? By taking back our words, by apologizing.

40. How must we make good injury to the neighbor's property? By restoration or payment.

41. What should be observed when we can not make restoration at once? We must have the earnest intention to do so as soon as possible.

42. What should they consider who will not avoid the near occasion or will not desist from their habitual sins? That the priest's absolution will be of no avail to them, but will aggravate their guilt.

43. What do those persons commit who confess their sins without contrition or without resolution of amendment? They commit a sacrilege, because they make an unworthy confession.

XVIII.—Confession.

Another one of the conditions for the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of Penance is the confession of sins.

What is the confession of sins?

Confession is the sorrowful declaration of our sins to a priest, in order to obtain absolution from him.

To go to confession means in general to receive the holy Sacrament of Penance. We have already been told that a properly ordained priest has the power to bind and to loose, to forgive sins or to retain them. But if the priest has, besides the power to loose, also the power to bind, it follows that the sins must be confessed to the priest, so that he may know whether to remit or retain. The confession of our sins to a regularly appointed priest must be a sorrowful and humble one. It must be made with the intention of receiving absolution from the priest. Telling our sins outside of the tribunal of Penance, at an occasional meeting, for instance, is not confession.

What are the necessary qualities of confession?

Our confession must be: 1. Entire; 2. Sincere; and, 3. Clear.

1. It is said to be entire when nothing is lacking, nothing concealed. Our confession, therefore, is entire when we do not knowingly or purposely omit any mortal sin, but confess *all* mortal sins committed, together with their number and the necessary circumstances. We have learned the reason why the *number* should be mentioned, for by this it may be decided whether a sin is habitual or only an occasional sin of frailty.

It is necessary also for the entirety of confession that all the necessary circumstances should be confessed, i. e., such facts or characteristics which render a sin more grievous than it is in itself.

But what must we do, if we do not recall the number rightly?

We must state it as well as we are able, and say, for instance, "I have committed this sin *about* so and so many times a day, a week, or a month."

It is not sufficient to confess our sins thus: "I have committed the sin often, very often, frequently, very frequently," etc. Those who examine their consciences earnestly and sincerely will be enabled to give the number of their sins precisely, or at least approximately.

What sort of circumstances must we confess?

We must, 1. Confess especially such circumstances as change the nature or aggravate the guilt of our sins; and, 2. Mention in general everything by which the confessor may be enabled to judge rightly of the state of our conscience, so as to put us on our guard against relapsing into sin.

There are circumstances which have no bearing upon the nature of sin, as, for instance, whether pears, apples, or peaches were the fruit stolen, or whether a white or a colored boy was the one ill treated. If, however, to steal apples we had to break into the garden, or we stole an article from a church, then we must remember that such circumstances aggravate the sin.

We will now place in order the circumstances to be considered:

a. The person, for instance, in a case of calumny or assault, whether the person was a priest, father, mother; in cases of immodesty, whether the person was married, related, or bound by vows of chastity.

b. The object, for instance in case of theft, whether much or little has been stolen, property of the poor, or of the church.

c. The place where we have sinned, for instance, in the church or other consecrated place, in school.

d. The means which the penitent made use of.

e. The intention which he had.

f. The time in which sin was committed.

g. The consequences resulting from our sin.

If a person had stolen church property, wished his parents' death, coveted his neighbor's wife, injured some one by telling a lie, it would not be sufficient for him to confess merely that he had stolen, wished ill to some persons, had evil desires, or had told a lie. Therefore, we must mention the extent of the injury done to our neighbor, whether with or without intent, whether the occasion of sin still continues, and also should mention whether we have often confessed the evil habit before and never corrected it. If we confess a sin and omit a necessary circumstance, our confession is just as invalid as that of a person who purposely conceals a mortal sin.

What must we observe in mentioning the circumstances?

1. We must not mention any person by name; 2. We must refrain from all needless details and stories; and, 3. We must express ourselves as modestly and decently as the nature of the sin allows.

We must relate our own sins, not the sins of others, nor throw the blame upon others in order to spare ourselves. If we have

sinned with others, then we must say, "I have stolen fruit with others, injured property," etc.

Must we also confess venial sins?

We are not obliged to confess our venial sins, yet it is good and salutary to do so.

Venial sins may also be effaced in other ways; for instance, by good works, by Holy Communion, by assisting with devotion at Holy Mass, and other devout exercises. Nevertheless, it is good and salutary to confess venial sins, because sometimes a sin taken by us for venial may be really a mortal sin. Although venial sins do not exclude us from the kingdom of heaven, yet they retard our entrance. Furthermore, venial sins lead easily to mortal sins.

If we are doubtful as to whether something is a mortal or a venial sin, what are we to do?

We must by all means confess it.

When is our confession sincere?

When we accuse ourselves just so as we believe ourselves guilty before God, without concealing, or disguising, or excusing.

What should the penitent consider if he is ashamed to make a sincere confession?

He should consider, 1. That a confession which is not sincere procures him neither remission of sins nor peace of conscience; but that confession, as well as the Communion which follows it, is another grievous sin—a sacrilege—and deserves eternal damnation; and, 2. That it is much better for him to confess his sins to one priest, bound by secrecy, than to live always uneasy in sin, to die unhappy and to be put to shame at the last day before the whole world.

By receiving a Sacrament unworthily we become guilty of a sacrilege. If we do not confess our sins sincerely, we commit an additional mortal sin, a blasphemy, because we offend God by the misuse of a Sacrament instituted by Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. Agony and remorse of conscience torments those who have made an unworthy confession. They have not another happy moment, and are fearful every moment that God will call them away in their sins. What is brief humiliation in the seclusion of the confessional, before a priest bound to secrecy, compared to the awful shame at the last judgment before the whole world, before our parents, brothers and sisters, before superiors and inferiors! Reflect, furthermore, that the confessor to whom you confess is also a human being, who must con-

fess, just as you do, his sins and shortcomings to another priest. The confessor is bound to the strictest secrecy, by the seal of confession, which he is not allowed to break under any circumstances, even if threatened with death, as seen by the example of St. John Nepomucene, who preferred to suffer death rather than reveal facts learned by him in the confessional. The humiliation which we undergo in the confessional by self accusation is a most powerful means to prevent us from sinning. In the early times the Christians confessed their sins publicly. How much easier it is to reveal our sins to a priest in private. St. Bonaventure says: "Those sins for which you have most occasion to blush should be revealed first."

What must we do if we have omitted something in confession which we were obliged to declare?

1. If we have omitted it without fault, it is only required to mention it in the next confession.

2. If we have omitted it through our fault, either because we were ashamed to confess it or because we did not carefully examine our conscience, we must repeat the whole last confession and as many before the last as were made invalid by the omission.

The Catechism distinguishes whether we omit a sin without fault through forgetfulness and excitement or whether we omit it purposely. In the first case, we need only repeat the sin in the next confession; in the latter case, we must repeat the confession or confessions in which we omitted the sin. Those who commit the grievous sin of wilful omission expose themselves to the great danger of being unexpectedly called from this life by almighty God, through a sudden death, and of being eternally lost.

When is confession clear?

When we express ourselves so that the confessor can understand everything well and clearly see the state of our conscience.

That which is clear is intelligible. When, therefore, our confession is not clear it is unintelligible. If a person were to make his confession indistinctly, mutter it, or express himself in such a way that the confessor can not understand him, and hence can not judge him, then the confession is not clear. If one thinks that he can make a good confession in this manner, he is very much mistaken. Neither must we speak too quickly, but in such a way that the confessor may hear and understand everything well.

Would our confession be clear if we accused ourselves only in

general terms? If, for example, we said: We have not loved God, we have thought, or spoken, evil?

By no means; we must distinctly name and specify the sins.

What is a general confession?

A general confession is one in which we repeat all or some of our former confessions.

When is a general confession necessary?

Whenever we have reason to fear that our former confessions have been invalid, either through want of sincerity, or of sorrow and resolution, or through a culpable negligence in the examination of our conscience.

Our confessions are unworthy :

1. When we do not examine our conscience at all, or not with the necessary care and solicitude.

2. When we either have no contrition or when our contrition did not possess the requisite qualities.

3. When we do not make the resolution to amend our lives, or when this resolution is not complete, sincere, and earnest.

4. When we do not give up or avoid the near occasion to sin when in a position to do so.

5. When we do not forgive all our enemies, without exception.

6. When we do not repair injury we have done to our neighbor's property or character, or do not take back the calumny.

7. When we either omit or are silent about a mortal sin or its essential circumstances.

If, for any of these reasons, we have made a bad confession, we have not received absolution from God, although we may have received it from the priest, and a general confession is necessary, i. e., it must be made. But even when not obliged to do so a general confession is at times advisable and salutary, and your confessor will be glad to answer your inquiry as to whether you should make one.

When especially is a general confession useful and advisable?

1. As a preparation for first communion; 2. On entering on a new state of life; 3. In dangerous illness; 4. At the time of a jubilee and of a mission.

When having made a good general confession before, we need not repeat this over again, but only make our confession from the time of our last general confession. General confessions are particularly recommended to those persons who, without being scrupu-

lous, have doubts about their former confessions, have lived frivolously and now earnestly desire to be converted to God.

It is not difficult to make a general confesson. We should just reflect upon how we have fulfilled our duties toward God, toward our neighbor and ourselves, how we have sinned in this respect; we should call to mind the sins of our life since childhood.

How are you to begin your confession?

Having made the sign of the cross, you say, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned." Then say the first part of the Confiteor as far as "through my most grievous fault." Begin with stating how long it is since your last confession, whether you received absolution, and whether you performed the penance. After this confess all the mortal sins you can recollect, beginning with those which you may have forgotten in your last confession. As we should begin everything good in the name of God and of the Most Holy Trinity, so begin your confession in the name of God. The priest, before hearing you, makes the sign of the cross over you and speaks the words: "The Lord be in thy heart and upon thy lips, that thou mayst confess thy sins rightly in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Confiteor may be omitted when there are many waiting to go to confession.

How do you finish your confession?

After stating your sins say: "For these, and all the sins of my whole life, I am most heartily sorry, because by them I have offended God, the Supreme and Most Amiable Good. I detest all my sins, and am firmly resolved to amend my life and to sin no more."

Should the confessor give a penance which you could not at present perform, you may ask him to give you another penance instead.

Upon leaving the confessional we should retire to a pew, thank God for the grace received of the forgiveness of sins, make a promise to lead a life more pleasing to Him, and remain a short while in devout meditation.

What are we to do if we should not receive absolution?

We should humbly submit to the decision of the confessor, follow obediently his instructions, and, by true amendment, render ourselves worthy of it at a future time. Of course, it is understood that when absolution has not been received we can not go to Holy Communion.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the confession of sins.

2. What is confession? Confession is a sorrowful declaration of our sins to a priest, in order to obtain absolution from him.

3. To whom do we confess? To a regularly ordained priest, who has received from his bishop the authority to hear confessions.

4. Why must we confess our sins to a regularly appointed priest? Because he alone has the power to bind and loose.

5. As the priest has not only the power to loose, but also the power to bind, what follows? It follows that the sinner must make the priest acquainted with his transgressions.

6. For what reason? In order that the priest may decide whether he should remit or retain.

7. What does the Catechism add as to how our sins should be confessed? We should confess with sorrow.

8. What are the necessary qualities of confession? Confession must be: 1. Entire. 2. Sincere, and 3. Clear.

9. When is our confession entire? Confession is entire when we confess at least all mortal sins which we remember, together with their number and necessary circumstances.

10. How may a sin be omitted? It may be omitted with or without intention.

11. When is the omission intentional? When we remember a sin in confession, but are ashamed to mention it, and thus omit it.

12. When is it unintentional? When we do not remember the sin at the time of our confession.

13. If a mortal sin is not remembered, is it also forgiven in confession? Yes; if the confession was worthy, mortal sins not remembered are forgiven with the others.

14. Why do we have to mention the number of our sins? In order that the priest may be able to decide whether a sin is habitual or one of frailty.

15. What would our confession be if we did not mention the number of our sins at all? Our confession would not be entire.

16. What else must we mention besides the number? The necessary circumstances, i. e., those facts or characteristics which render a sin more grievous.

17. What sort of circumstances must we confess? We must: 1. Especially confess such circumstances as change the nature or aggravate the guilt of our sins, and 2. Mention in general everything by which the confessor may be able to judge rightly of the state of our conscience, and thus put us on our guard against relapsing into sin.

18. What does he do who purposely omits a circumstance which aggravates the sin? He has confessed as unworthily and invalidly as if he had wilfully omitted a mortal sin.

19. What should the priest be as confessor? He should be our soul's physician.

20. From what should the sinner be protected and preserved? From a relapse.

21. What did Jesus say to the man sick for thirty-eight years? Jesus said to him: "Sin no more, lest still worse befall thee."

22. Whose sins do we have to confess? Only our own.

23. Whose sins should we not confess? The sins of other persons.

24. What should we avoid in confession? The mention of any one by name and all needless talk and stories.

25. How should we acknowledge our sins? Briefly and clearly.

26. What else should be observed at confession? We should express ourselves as decently as the nature of the sin permits.

27. Must we also confess venial sins? We are not obliged to confess venial sins, yet it is good and salutary to do so.

28. Why is it not necessary to confess venial sins? Because these may be effaced by other means.

29. By what means? By good works, by receiving Holy Communion, by devoutly assisting at Mass, and other pious exercises.

30. When, however, we are in doubt whether a sin is venial, what ought we to do? We must by all means confess it, because we may easily take a grievous sin to be venial.

31. When is confession sincere? When we accuse ourselves just as we sincerely believe ourselves guilty before God, without concealing, disguising anything, or excusing ourselves by vain pretenses.

32. Why are some penitents not sincere at confession? Because they are ashamed of their sins.

33. What should the penitent consider if he is ashamed to make a sincere confession? He should consider: 1. That a confession which is not sincere procures him neither remission of sins nor peace of conscience, but that the confession, as well as the Communion which follows it, are additional mortal sins, deserving eternal damnation; and 2. That it is much better for him to confess his sins to a priest, bound by secrecy, than to live always in sin, to die an unhappy death, and to be put to shame at judgment day before the whole world.

34. May a priest reveal anything heard in confession? A priest is never, and under no conditions, allowed to reveal anything from confession.

35. What is the inviolable secrecy of confession called? The seal of confession.

36. Who must observe the secrecy of confession? The priest and also other persons who accidentally overhear something said in confession.

37. How strict is the obligation imposed upon the priest by the seal of confession? It is of the strictest kind. The priest must therefore choose death rather than break the seal of confession.

38. What priest suffered death on account of the seal of confession? St. John Nepomucene.

39. How did the early Christians confess their sins? They confessed them publicly.

40. What must we do if we have omitted something in confession which we were obliged to confess. (Answer as in lesson.)

41. How many cases, therefore, does the Catechism mention in regard to the omission of sin? It distinguishes two cases: 1. An intentional and culpable one. 2. One that is unintentional and not culpable.

42. When is the omission of a grievous sin a great transgression? When we remember a mortal sin in confession and then purposely conceal it.

43. What is to be observed in this case? We must tell the priest about it and repeat all confessions in which the wilful omission was made.

44. What must be done if omitted without our fault? We have only to repeat that particular sin in our next confession.

45. What is a general confession? A general confession is that in which we repeat all or some of our former confessions.

46. When is a general confession necessary? (Answer as in lesson.)

47. Upon what occasions are general confessions usually made? Before first communion and at missions.

48. How do you begin your confession? (Answer as in lesson.)

49. What are we to do if we should not receive absolution? We must humbly submit to the decision of the confessor, obey his instructions, and by true amendment render ourselves more worthy of absolution.

Remember well what you have heard to-day concerning confession. Go to confession frequently, and be careful to make good confessions. This will be to your advantage and profit. Never omit a mortal sin wilfully in confession, and remember well that what you do not confess to the priest in secret will be known at the last day, and that by a bad confession you commit a very grievous sin, a sacrilege. From which may God preserve you all your life long!

XIX.—Penance and Restitution.

The final condition for a worthy confession is the acceptation of the penance imposed by the priest.

We have already heard that we are not able to render complete satisfaction to God for the numerous and grievous sins with which we have offended Him, but that Christ has made complete satisfaction for us. We, however, must and can render some satisfaction with God's grace, for in the same way as the merits of the good works which we perform in a state of grace come from the merits of Christ, so also the penitential works which we perform in the state of grace receive through the satisfaction of Christ the power to merit for us a remission of temporal punishment for sin. When we speak of satisfaction through the Sacrament of Penance we understand, first of all, the performance of the penance enjoined by the priest. But we are obliged to render satisfaction after confession also by repairing, to the best of our ability, whatever wrong we have done or inflicted upon others; in other words, we must make restitution.

For what purpose does the priest impose a penance upon us?

1. To obtain remission of the temporal punishment due for our sins; and, 2. For the amendment of our life. The penances laid upon us by the Church are, therefore, a punishment, a deserved chastisement for the evil deeds committed.

Protestants reject satisfaction on the sinner's part by saying that it is derogatory to the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. But when we suffer and do penance for our sins we, 1. Shall be made conformable to Jesus; and, 2. Obtain thereby the pledge that, suffering with Jesus, we shall also be glorified with Jesus.

Satisfaction on our part is not only demanded by divine justice, it also teaches us to be careful, vigilant, and afraid of sinning. Furthermore, penance will destroy evil habits by a practice of the opposite virtues. Thus, for instance, fasting is not only a penance agreeable to God, but also a cure for intemperance, voluptuousness, sensuality, and lust; humble prayer is a corrective for pride; almsgiving, an antidote for avarice. Any good work may be imposed by the confessor as a penance, and it becomes such if performed in obedience, willingly and devoutly.

Why must we do penance? When God remits the sin, does He not also remit all punishment due on account of it?

God always remits the *eternal* punishment with the sin, but He does not always remit the *temporal* punishment due for it. In the Sacrament of Baptism with sin all punishment, temporal and eternal, is remitted, but not so in the Sacrament of Penance. In respect to this the Council of Trent says: "Divine justice requires that those who have sinned before baptism from ignorance, i. e., not knowing the faith, will be admitted to grace by God; those, however, who once delivered from the slavery of Satan, and having received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, do not fear knowingly to disgrace the Temple of God, are treated differently. Thus did God remit, through the intercession of Moses, the sins of the people of Israel when they had fallen into idolatry, but He did not remit temporal punishment in their case, and, consequently, they were not allowed to enter into the Promised Land. The Prophet Nathan announced to David, who had repented of his sin, that, "The Lord hath taken away thy sin, nevertheless the child that is born to thee shall surely die" (II. Kings xii. 13, 14).

The fact that a father loves his child must not prevent him from inflicting deserved chastising upon him.

What is the temporal punishment due to our sins?

It is the punishment which we must suffer either here on earth or in purgatory. Temporal punishment, therefore, may be expiated here in this world by penance and other good works, as, a patient endurance of sufferings, also prayers, fasting, almsgiving, etc., or it must be expiated in purgatory.

It is safe to say that the sufferings in purgatory will be greater than those of this world. How much of the temporal punishment will be remitted to us in confession depends upon the profoundness of our contrition and upon the worthy preparation.

From whom has the priest the power to impose works of penance?

From Jesus Christ, who gave to His Church the power not only to loose, but also to bind (Matt. xviii. 18). Jesus once said to His apostles, "As the Father has sent me, so do I send you." Christ has appointed the priests in the tribunal of penance to be not only physicians of the soul, but also to be judges, and as such they have the right to punish.

We should be all the more willing to perform the penance imposed upon us, and even to increase voluntarily out penitential works,

when we remember that in former times penances were far more severe. Grievous sins committed publicly were punished by public penances. In early Christian times penance was prescribed in four successive degrees:

a. The first degree, or the lowest grade of penitent, called the *weepers,* who, barefooted, clad in coarse sackcloth, knelt outside the church door, asking forgiveness of those entering the church for the scandal they had given, and imploring their intercession.

b. After the penitent had undergone this penance for a certain period, generally several years, he was allowed to pass into the station of the *listeners,* who were admitted to the rear part of the church.

c. After that came the station of the *kneelers,* who after the sermon had to kneel upon the floor in the middle of the church and beg for forgiveness.

d. The fourth station was that of those who, though admitted to the service, were not allowed to go to Holy Communion.

During these periods of penance the penitent frequently lived upon bread and water. Of some of the severe penances then common I will mention that for a slight calumny a week's fast on bread and water was imposed; for cheating in weight or measure, twenty days' fasting on bread and water, and full restitution was enjoined.

Is the confession invalid if the penitent does not perform the penance enjoined?

If after confession he does not perform the penance which in confession he sincerely intended to perform the confession is not rendered invalid, but he commits a new sin, and deprives himself of many graces.

If, however, in confession a person has not the intention to perform the penance, then the confession is invalid.

When should we comply with the penance enjoined?

If the confessor has fixed no particular time for it, the best way is to comply with it directly, before we may fall again into sin.

Should we perform that penance only which the confessor imposes?

We should endeavor to satisfy the divine justice by other voluntary penitential works.

If, for instance, our confessor imposes prayers for a penance, let us add to these almsgiving, etc. Realizing that we have deserved great punishment for our many sins, we should persevere stead-

fastly in prayer, assist at Mass as often as possible, fast, practise works of mercy, and impose mortifications upon ourselves. We practise penance especially by bearing our sufferings patiently and for the love of God, while murmuring and impatience in suffering deprive us of the fruit of satisfaction.

If we neglect to do penance for temporal punishment in this world, then it will have to be done after death in purgatory. How foolish are persons who would not prefer the lesser to the greater evil. Here upon earth we may do penance easily and without suffering, by good works, and obtain fresh merit for ourselves. In purgatory, however, our penance will be accomplished by great suffering, and there we can obtain no merit, but only render satisfaction to divine justice.

Are we, after confession, under no other obligation than to do penance?

We are also obliged:

1. To repair to our best ability any scandal we may have given and any injury we may have unjustly done to our neighbor; and,

2. To employ the necessary means not to relapse into sin, and to amend our life.

We have, therefore, not made nearly enough satisfaction if we only do the penance enjoined upon us by the priest; but we must also make restitution, for instance, by restoring the property we have stolen or unjustly acquired, repairing injury wrongly done to others, retracting calumny, asking pardon for insults, reconciliation with our enemies, and avoiding the near occasion for sin.

We must make restitution according to our ability. Unfortunately, there are wrongs the consequences of which can not be repaired. He, for instance, who deprives another of life can not restore that life. How can a tradesman fully make good the injury done by dishonest dealing? How is a person who, by arson, has reduced valuable property to ashes, to repair the injury done? Nevertheless, we are bound to do all in our power to make due reparation. We are also obliged to employ the right means to amend our lives. What are these means?

1. In the first place, there must be the firm desire and resolution to amend our lives at any cost.

2. This determination should be frequently renewed, particularly at our night prayers.

3. Every evening we should examine ourselves as to whether we have kept this resolution.

4. We must pray to God for His assistance.

5. It is salutary to read and meditate upon the lives of the saints, who strove to live free of sin.

6. We should keep in mind the consequences that will result if we continue to live in sin and how it will be more and more difficult for us to reform the older we grow in sin.

Application.—When you have sinned go to confession at the earliest opportunity, always with diligent examination of conscience, true contrition, firm resolution of amendment and sincere declaration of your sins, so that the Sacrament of Penance, so replete with grace, may not become for you a source of eternal perdition.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of penance and restitution.

2. What is meant by satisfaction through the Sacrament of Penance? It is the performance of the penance enjoined by the priest.

3. Has not Christ made full satisfaction for our sins? Yes; Christ has abundantly satisfied for our sins; nevertheless He requires that we also make satisfaction in union with Him.

4. Of which work of satisfaction is first made question here? Of the penance enjoined upon us by our confessor.

5. What else belongs to a complete satisfaction? That we repair the injury occasioned by our sins.

6. What else is necessary? The amendment of our lives.

7. Is this amendment easy or difficult? It is difficult.

8. What is particularly difficult? 1. The laying aside of bad habits. 2. The avoidance of the near occasions of sin.

9. How can we only accomplish our amendment? By the grace of God.

10. For what purpose does the confessor impose a penance on us? 1. To obtain remission of the temporal punishment, and 2. For the amendment of our life.

11. As what, therefore, is penance imposed in the first place? As a chastisement or punishment for the sins we have committed.

12. Who reject this doctrine of satisfaction on the sinner's part? Protestants.

13. What reason do they give for this? They say that it is derogatory to the satisfaction of Christ.

14. What have we learnt in reference to this to-day? 1. Through works of penance we are made conformable to Jesus. 2. We obtain thereby a pledge that, if suffering with Jesus, we shall also be glorified with Jesus.

15. How may we satisfy divine justice? By doing penance for our sins.

16. What further profit has penance? It destroys bad habits by the practise of the opposite virtues.

17. What is fasting, for example? It is, in the first place, a penance agreeable to God, but also a remedy for intemperance, sensuality, and lust.

18. What is humble prayer? It is a cure for pride.

19. What is almsgiving? It is the best antidote for avarice.

20. How must a good work be performed as penance? It must be performed in obedience and humility, and not grudgingly.

21. When God remits sin, does He also remit all punishment due on account of it? With sin God always remits the eternal punishment, but He does not always remit the temporal punishment.

22. In which sacrament is the eternal as well as the temporal punishment of sin remitted? In the Sacrament of Baptism.

23. Give me an example from Bible history showing that temporal punishment is demanded by God. Through the intercession of Moses God remitted the sin of the people of Israel, yet they were not allowed to enter the Promised Land.

24. Give another example. The Prophet Nathan announced to King David, who repented of his sin, that "the Lord hath taken away thy sin, nevertheless the child that is born to thee shall surely die" (II. Kings xii. 13, 14).

25. What comparison did I give? If a father loves his son dearly, that must not prevent him from chastising and punishing that son if so deserved.

26. What is the temporal punishment due to our sins? It is that punishment which we have to suffer either here on earth or in purgatory.

27. Where, then, may temporal punishment be expiated? Here on earth and in purgatory.

28. How may it be expiated in this world? By penitential and other good works, such as praying, fasting, and almsgiving.

29. Is it easier to expiate temporal punishment in this world or in the next? In this world.

30. How much of the temporal punishment is remitted in confession? That depends upon the sinner's contrition and preparation.

31. From whom has the priest the power to impose works of penance? From Jesus Christ, who gave to His Church the power, not only to loose but also to bind (Matt. xviii. 18).

32. With what words did Jesus confer this power upon the apostles and their successors? "As the Father hath sent me, so do I send you."

33. What meaning is contained in these words? "The power which I have received from my heavenly Father, I confer upon you."

34. What fact should incite us to perform willingly the penance imposed upon us? The fact that the Church's penances are very light in our days.

35. How were they formerly? They were very severe and had to be performed publicly.

36. Is the confession invalid if the penitent does not perform the penance enjoined? (Answer as in lesson.)

37. When, therefore, does the neglect to perform the penance render confession invalid? When in confession we had not the intention to perform the penance.

38. What are the consequences of our not performing the penance enjoined? 1. We commit a sin, and 2. We deprive ourselves of many graces.

39. What graces do we deprive ourselves of? The sacramental graces of amendment of life and of preservation from relapsing into sin.

40. To what danger does the impenitent sinner expose himself? To the danger of having to undergo a very severe punishment instead of the neglected light one.

41. When should we comply with the penance enjoined? Immediately after confession.

42. Why immediately? In order that we may not forget or neglect it.

43. Should we perform only the penance which the confessor orders? No; we should perform also voluntary penances.

44. What shall we have to expect if we neglect to make due satisfaction to Divine Justice? We shall have so much more to suffer in purgatory, and there without any merit for heaven.

45. Are we after confession under no other obligation than to do the prescribed penance? We are also obliged, 1. To repair to the best of our ability scandal we may have given and injury we may have unjustly done to our neighbor; 2. To employ the necessary means not to relapse into sin, and to amend our life.

46. What is scandal? Scandal is the bad example given to others.

47. How can we make good as much as possible the bad example, scandal, we have given? By a good example, by a devout and Godfearing life.

48. How can and must we repair calumnies? By taking back our words and by asking forgiveness of the injured person.

49. How must we repair the injury done to our neighbor's property? By restitution and compensation.

50. Can we repair all the harm we do by sin? No; unfortunately we can not; hence we say to the best of our ability.

51. What are we further obliged to do? We must employ the proper means to amend our life.

52. What are these means? Above all we must have the firm resolution and determination to amend our life, cost what it may.

53. And what ought we to do so as not to forget this resolution? We should renew the same daily.

54. What is necessary for our keeping this resolution? The grace of God, for which we should incessantly pray.

55. Of what should we think frequently? Of the fearful fate that will befall us if we do not amend our lives.

56. What is this fate? We shall be eternally lost.

57. What have we learned from the instruction on penance? 1. We should cheerfully perform the penances imposed by the confessor; 2. We should not be satisfied with doing them, but do additional penitential work. 3. We should avoid the wrongful injury of others in health, character, or property. 4. If we have caused wrongful injury we must repair the same to the best of our ability.

XX.—On Indulgences.

In our last instruction we learned that in the Sacrament of Penance with sin the eternal punishment is remitted, but not the temporal, and that it is good and salutary to do penance for temporal punishment in this world, so that we may not have to suffer in purgatory. For this expiation of temporal punishment the Catholic Church comes to our assistance with the granting of Indulgences.

What is an indulgence?

An indulgence is a remission granted, apart from the Sacrament of Penance, of temporal punishment which, after the sin is forgiven, is still due us, and for which we must atone, either here or in purgatory.

How does the Church remit the punishment due to our sins?

By making compensation to the divine justice for us from the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ and His saints. You have already heard that the offending of the infinite majesty of God requires an infinite satisfaction or expiation. This atonement was rendered by Jesus Christ through His Passion and death. His satisfaction is inexhaustible, because it has infinite merits. To this satisfaction which Jesus has rendered are added also the surplus of merits of the Blessed Virgin and the saints. This work of satisfaction of Christ and the merits of His saints form an inexhaustible and infinite treasure of spiritual goods and graces which belongs to the entire Church and which can be turned over by her to individual members. The merits of the saints have their merit only from the satisfaction of Christ. The merits of Christ are not prejudiced thereby; on the contrary, they appear all the more glorious, as they grant so high a merit to the works of the saints that they can be applied to us.

From whom has the Catholic Church the power of granting indulgences?

From Jesus Christ, who made no exception when He said to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 19).

1. The power to loose, or the power of the keys, is a general one, which refers to all those bonds and obstructions which would prevent the faithful from entering into heaven. To these belong also those temporal punishments which have still to be undergone.

2. Jesus has given the commission to His Church to continue His work until the end of the world. The Church, by the power which has been imparted to her by the Holy Ghost, makes use of it in the distribution of indulgences.

3. Indulgences were used in the Church from the earliest times. The following is a proof of this: The Apostle Paul excommunicated a public sinner at Corinth. After he had suffered his punishment for a year the Apostle Paul granted him an indulgence, by exempting him from the remaining penance. In the first centuries of Christianity the punishment was often remitted to penitents, or the time of their punishment lessened.

The right to grant indulgences for the entire Church belongs to the Pope; since the fourth Council of Trent in the Lateran the bishops are allowed to grant a partial indulgence in individual cases.

What is generally required to gain an indulgence?

It is required, 1. That we are in the state of grace; and, 2. That we perform properly the good works prescribed for the gaining of the indulgence.

1. The first requisite, therefore, is this, that we are in a state of sanctifying grace. In a state of mortal sin or in a state of disgrace we are a dead member of the body of the Church. The temporal punishment, therefore, can not be wiped out until, first of all, the sins are forgiven. We must, first of all, receive worthily the Sacrament instituted for the forgiveness of sins.

2. Furthermore it is necessary that for the gaining an indulgence we perform properly the good works prescribed.

The good works prescribed are, as a rule, the following:

a. A worthy reception of the holy Sacraments of Penance and the holy Eucharist.

b. One or more visits of one or several churches.

c. The performance of prescribed prayers with the required intention.

d. Fasting and almsgiving.

With the announcing of an indulgence it is always made known what is required for the gaining of the same, so that we may know exactly what to do.

What must we believe with regard to indulgences?

We must believe:

1. That the Catholic Church has power to grant indulgences; and,

2. That the use of them is very salutary to us.

The Council of Trent has declared these two points Articles of Faith, in these words: "The holy Synod teaches and commands that the use of indulgences, which is very salutary for the Christian people, shall be upheld in the Church and imposed, with the excommunication of those who aver that they are unnecessary, or that the Church has not the power to grant them."

Indulgences are salutary, for they encourage the sinner to make his peace with God and to do penance; they promote the frequent and worthy reception of the holy Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; they promote devotion and zeal in prayer among the faithful; they induce the faith to shine, cause hope to be strengthened and charity to be kindled; they promote compassion for the poor and needy, and lay the foundation for many virtues.

How many kinds of indulgences are there?

There are two kinds: Plenary and partial indulgences.

When is an indulgence plenary?

An indulgence is plenary when it remits to the one gaining it the whole debt of temporal punishment due to sin.

When is an indulgence partial?

When it remits a part only of the punishment due to sin.

What is meant by an indulgence of forty days, or of seven years?

A remission of such a debt of temporal punishment as a person would discharge if he did penance for forty days or seven years, according to the ancient canons of the Church.

There are also local indulgences which can only be gained at certain places of pilgrimage, or places favored particularly by divine grace. These are only granted by the Pope for their appointed places. There are, furthermore, personal indulgences granted only to an individual under certain conditions, as the indulgence at the point of death.

Can indulgences also be rendered available to the souls in purgatory?

Yes; all those which the Pope has expressly declared to be so applicable. The Pope has jurisdiction only over the Church militant, over the living. Indulgences, however, can be applied to the departed by way of intercession.

What is a jubilee indulgence, and what is remarkable about it?

The name is derived from the jubilee year of the Jews, every fiftieth year, in which work in the fields was discontinued, slaves received their freedom and property which had been alienated re-

verted to the original owner or his heirs. In like manner in the new law of grace a spiritual jubilee is celebrated. At first it took place every hundred years; later every fifty years; and now every twenty-five years. It is proclaimed at Rome with great solemnity and inaugurated with imposing ceremonies by the opening of four sealed doors of the principal church. By devotions in church and numerous penitential works during this time of grace the faithful are earnestly exhorted to new zeal in penance and to an amendment of life.

Although taking part in the jubilee is not enjoined under pain of sin, yet it certainly shows great indifference on the part of the faithful if they do not accept this solemn invitation of the Church to profit of her treasures for our salvation. It is to be noted that during the time of a jubilee other indulgences can not be gained by the living, but they can be gained for the dead; during this time all indulgences without exception may be applied to the dead.

What is an indulgence at death?

The indulgence at death, usually called general absolution, is a plenary indulgence, which is granted to the faithful when dying. It is administered after the last Sacraments have been received at the approach of death. The dying should thereby awaken acts of contrition, charity, and resignation, and frequently and devoutly pronounce the sweet name of Jesus.

There has hardly been any other doctrine of the Catholic Church so much abused as the doctrine of indulgences. The Church has been falsely accused of selling indulgences; ignorance and malice again have slandered the Church with the allegation that indulgences remit *sins* already committed or to be committed. Remember, therefore, that indulgences do not remit sins, but the temporal punishment due to an already forgiven sin.

Application.—Value and esteem the indulgences and avail yourself of every opportunity to gain them worthily, for yourself as well as for the souls of the faithful departed.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak in to-day's instruction? Of indulgences.
2. What is an indulgence? (Answer as in lesson.)
3. What, therefore, is granted by an indulgence? Remission of temporal punishment.
4. Are sins ever forgiven by indulgences? No; sins are never forgiven by indulgences.

5. Where are sins committed after baptism forgiven? In the Sacrament of Penance.

6. Where is the eternal punishment of sin remitted? Also in the Sacrament of Penance.

7. What, however, is not entirely remitted by the Sacrament of Penance? The temporal punishment is not entirely remitted.

8. Who comes to our assistance in the expiating of temporal punishment? The Catholic Church.

9. In what way does she come to our assistance? By granting indulgences.

10. What is, above all, necessary for the gaining of an indulgence with regard to sins? The sins must already have been forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance.

11. How does the Church remit the punishment due to our sins? By making for us compensation to the Divine Justice from the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ and His saints.

12. What do man's grievous offenses of God require? They require an *infinite* satisfaction.

13. Why? Because through sin the *infinite* majesty of God has been offended.

14. Who has rendered this infinite satisfaction? Our divine Saviour, Jesus Christ.

15. In what way did He render satisfaction? By His life, passion, and death.

16. What merits are added to these? The merits of Blessed Mary and the other saints.

17. What do these merits form altogether? They form an infinite and inexhaustible treasure of spiritual goods and graces.

18. What is done with this inexhaustible treasure of graces? This inexhaustible treasure of graces is applied to the members of the Church.

19. From whom has the Catholic Church the power of granting indulgences? From Jesus Christ, who made no exception when He said: "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

20. To what does the power to loose in the Church refer? It refers to all those bonds and obstacles which would prevent the faithful from entering into heaven.

21. What belongs to these obstacles? The temporal punishments which we have to undergo for our sins.

22. Whence do we know further that the Catholic Church has the power to grant indulgences? Jesus commissioned His Church to continue His work until the end of the world. Therewith she has also the right to exercise the power to bind and loose until the end of the world.

23. Is the granting of indulgences by the Church a new or an old institution? It is an old institution.

24. How can you prove this? After St. Paul the apostle had excommunicated a public sinner at Corinth, he remitted the remainder of this punishment after the sinner had suffered it for a year.

25. Give another proof. In the early ages of the Church the punishments of penitents were often remitted or lessened.

26. Who has a right to grant indulgences? The right belongs, in the first place, to our Holy Father, the Pope, but the bishops have the power of granting some partial indulgences.

27. What is required to gain an indulgence? It is required: 1. That we are in a state of grace. 2. That we properly perform the good works prescribed for the gaining of an indulgence.

28. What, therefore, is the first requisite? That we are in the state of grace.

29. What does that mean? That means free from all mortal sin.

30. How do we gain the state of grace? By worthily receiving the Sacrament of Penance.

31. What must we do, therefore, before gaining an indulgence? We must make a good confession.

32. What is the second requisite? That we properly perform the prescribed good works.

33. In what do the prescribed good works usually consist? In praying, fasting, and almsgiving.

34. What must we believe with regard to indulgences? We must believe: 1. That the Catholic Church has power to grant indulgences; and 2. That the use of them is salutary to us.

35. Who has made this declaration? The Council of Trent.

36. Why are indulgences salutary? Because thereby an opportunity is accorded the faithful to expiate in this world the temporal punishments which they otherwise have to undergo in purgatory.

37. In what other way are they salutary? They incite us to zeal in prayer, effect the conversion of sinners, promote mercy toward the poor and needy, and induce restitution of ill-gotten goods.

38. How many kinds of indulgences are there? There are two kinds: plenary and partial.

39. When is an indulgence plenary? When it remits all temporal punishment.

40. When is the indulgence partial? When it remits only a part of the temporal punishment.

41. What are local indulgences? Local indulgences are those which may only be gained in certain places of grace.

42. What is understood by a personal indulgence? We understand thereby, for instance, general absolution granted to the dying.

43. Can indulgences also be rendered available to the souls in purgatory? Yes; all those which the Pope has expressly declared to be applicable to them.

44. Is the gaining of an indulgence sufficient to release a soul from the sufferings of purgatory? We do not know that, of course.

45. What is meant by a jubilee indulgence? It is a plenary indulgence which the Holy Father grants every twenty-five years.

46. When we have the opportunity to gain an indulgence, what should we do? We should strive to gain every indulgence, either for ourselves or the souls in purgatory.

XXI.—Extreme Unction.

In the explanation of the Sacraments we come now to Extreme Unction.

What is Extreme Unction?

Extreme Unction is a Sacrament in which the sick by the anointing with holy oil, and by the prayer of the priest, receive the grace of God for the good of the soul, and sometimes also of the body.

This Sacrament is called *Extreme Unction* because it is usually the *last* of the holy unctions administered by the Church.

As man at his entrance into life is in Holy Baptism sanctified by anointing, so also upon his departure from this life he is anointed, sanctified, and cleansed from the remains of his sins.

It is necessary that we should be well instructed concerning this Sacrament, because it is received only during serious illness, when instructions may not be possible. While only the sick can receive this Sacrament, they should not wait until in extreme danger of death, but should, if possible, receive it while yet in possession of their senses.

Whence do we know that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ?

We know this: 1. From Holy Scripture; and, 2. From the invariable doctrine of the Church.

What does Holy Scripture say of Extreme Unction?

The Apostle St. James says in his Epistle (v. 14, 15), "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Holy Scripture does not say when and how Christ instituted the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, but the words of St. James above quoted prove that it was instituted by Christ as a Sacrament. We know, also, that such was the invariable doctrine of the Church. Extreme Unction was at all times administered in the Church, and in proof of this it is even found among the Oriental sects of early origin. Furthermore, the Council of Trent has expressed itself thereupon in the following words: "If any one says that Extreme

Unction is not a true and real Sacrament instituted by Christ Our Lord, and proclaimed by the Apostle St. James, but only an accepted custom of the Fathers, or that it is of human invention, let him be anathema!"

Holy Fathers of the Church, as St. Chrysostom and others, rank Extreme Unction with Baptism and Penance, denoting it a Sacrament the same as these.

What is the outward sign of this Sacrament?

The outward sign of Extreme Unction is found in the anointing of the sick person with oil (matter) and the prayer which is said at the anointing (form).

How is Extreme Unction administered?

The priest anoints with holy oil the various organs of senses of the sick person, and uses at each anointing this form of prayer: "Through this holy unction and God's mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever sins thou hast committed by thy sight, by thy hearing," etc.

Who administers this holy Sacrament?

The priest.

To whom is Extreme Unction administered?

To the sick only.

The first of the five senses is sight; the organs of sight are the eyes. What evil have the eyes done? They have willingly beheld evil; they have directed their gaze where they ought not to have directed it. The ears have listened with gratification to wickedness, lies, and calumnies, to detraction, immoral jests and songs, cursing, etc. How may the mouth have sinned? It may have spoken evil, may have lied, cursed, calumniated, uttered immoral words, given false testimony, sworn false oaths, blasphemed God, etc. The hands may have stolen, the hand of a wicked son has been raised against his parents to ill use them, with the hand the murderer has committed his horrible deed of blood, with the hands dishonesty and other injustice committed. With the feet we go to places where we sin, as, for instance, dance halls, etc. The sins of all these and other organs are forgiven in Extreme Unction through the tender mercy of God.

What are the effects of Extreme Unction?

Extreme Unction, 1. Increases sanctifying grace; 2. Remits venial sins, and also those mortal sins which the sick person can no longer confess; 3. Removes the remains of sins already forgiven; and, 4.

Strengthens the soul in her sufferings and temptations, especially in death agony.

1. Extreme Unction increases in us sanctifying grace, for it is a Sacrament of the living, and can, as a rule, be administered after the mortal sins have already been forgiven.

2. Extreme Unction remits venial sins. For this reason St. James says, "If he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." But through Extreme Unction even those mortal sins are remitted which the sick person can no longer confess. So long as confession is possible, the Sacrament of Penance is necessary for the forgiveness of mortal sins and as preparation for Extreme Unction. If, however, confession is impossible, then, if great contrition is present, mortal sins may be forgiven by Extreme Unction.

3. By Extreme Unction the remains of sins are removed. Even after sins have been forgiven there remain weakness of the will, inclination to evil and temporal punishment. Even if the soul has been cleansed from sin, yet all the consequences of sin have not been removed. The soul is still greatly hindered by the consequences of sin, remembrance of past sins fills it with fear and trembling at the approach of death.

4. It fortifies the sick person to bear his sufferings patiently, to overcome the temptations of the evil one, and to meet death with Christian resignation. Suffering, trouble, and care may depress the sick person, and discourage him, but the Lord comforts him through the reception of the Sacraments. While death agony can not be avoided, it is often greatly lessened and the patient is fortified to bear it more easily by Extreme Unction.

Extreme Unction also often relieves the pains of the sick person during his illness, and sometimes restores him to health, if God deems this expedient for the salvation of his soul.

Soul and body are intimately united to one another, and frequently the welfare of the body depends upon the repose and disposition of the mind, that is, of the soul. The devout and reasonable Christian can desire nothing better than that the state of his conscience should be in order. Is not the sick man solicitous for the order of his household, his temporal affairs, the making of his will? Why, therefore, should he not be more solicitous for the welfare of his soul, which will live forever?

The reception of Extreme Unction should, therefore, inspire men with sentiments of confidence and hope, not with fear of death and

anxiety, for Extreme Unction is salutary for both soul and body. A person grievously sick should not, therefore, delay the reception of this Sacrament until in extreme danger or too late.

Who can receive Extreme Unction?

Every Catholic who has come to the use of reason and who is in danger of death by sickness.

It, therefore, can not only be received by adults, but also by children who have reached the age of reason. Those in danger of death from reasons other than sickness, as, for instance, criminals condemned to be executed, can not receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, as it can only be administered to the *sick*.

To children under seven years of age and to idiots and insane it can not be administered. That it is an obligation to receive Extreme Unction in serious illness is verified by the words of St. James. If it is not, like Baptism, an indispensable means of salvation, yet it is enjoined upon the sick in danger of death, and the neglect of so great a Sacrament would not be free from grave fault and offense to the Holy Ghost.

How are we to receive Extreme Unction?

We are to receive it:

1. In the state of grace, wherefore we must previously, if possible, confess our sins or at least make an act of perfect contrition; and,

2. With faith, hope, charity, and resignation to the will of God.

Extreme Unction is, as we have already heard, a Sacrament of the living. We must, therefore, be in a state of grace when receiving it, for which reason we should, when possible, previously confess and communicate. When no longer possible to receive the Sacrament of Penance, we must, at least, make an act of perfect contrition.

1. The act of faith. We must believe in general all that God commands us to believe, and in particular that God can and will help us in every serious sickness if it is expedient for the salvation of our soul. 2. We may also hope for the divine assistance in the greatest dangers of life, for God is good, almighty, and faithful; therefore, we may hope for the Lord's assistance. 3. If God sends us sufferings, or even death, God does it for our advantage. This earth is but a vale of tears, full of suffering, cares, hardships, and oppressions of all kinds, and to a good and pious Christian the choice between this and the next life can not be difficult.

God knows in His omniscience and wisdom what is best for our salvation. We should, therefore, be resigned to His holy will.

When should we receive Extreme Unction?

We should receive it while still in our senses, after having received the Viaticum.

If a sick person is in mortal sin and puts off receiving the Sacrament of Penance he runs a great risk, for he may gradually become unconscious and thus have no time to repent of his sins. Without repentance there is no forgiveness. Even Extreme Unction can not be administered to him if he should lapse into unconsciousness before having repented of his sins. Furthermore, a sick person very near death is usually no longer able to prepare himself properly, or co-operate, and, therefore, deprives himself of many graces. We should, therefore, not postpone the reception of Extreme Unction. It is particularly the duty of relatives of the sick person to call in the priest in good time, and surely when there is a sudden change for the worst. We should not leave our relatives who are dangerously sick in ignorance of their condition. It is an unjustifiable false regard for the sick person, in fact, neglect and cruelty, when from fear of tiring the sick person, or frightening him, we cause him to postpone the receiving of the last Sacraments until perhaps too late. Many sick persons can not recognize the danger of their condition, even believe that they are getting better, when really death is at the door.

How often may Extreme Unction be received?

In each dangerous illness it can be received and can be repeated in the same illness on relapse into danger. During a continued period of danger Extreme Unction can only be received once. Its effects last as long as the immediate danger of death continues. We can and should receive it as often in life as we are dangerously ill and death might occur.

When God visits you with dangerous illness, be sure not to put off the receiving of the holy Sacraments to the last moment, otherwise death may surprise you when it is no longer possible to have the attendance of a priest. The sick room should be properly prepared when the priest comes to administer the last Sacraments.

The following things are necessary: A small table covered with a clean white cloth; on it a crucifix and one or two lighted candles in candlesticks; some holy water in a small vessel, with a sprinkler, which may be a piece of palm; a glass of clean water, a tablespoon, a napkin for the sick person, some white cotton wadding, water and towel.

Every Catholic family should have all these things ready, for per-

sons may be taken suddenly ill during the night and the administration of the Sacraments may be delayed on account of the absence of preparation. While the last Sacraments are administered the patient's relations should offer up prayers for him, especially when the moment of death is approaching. It is an old custom to light a blessed candle in the sickroom. It is to remind of the candle at Holy Baptism and first Communion, and symbolizes Christ, the only light in the shadow of death and the eternal light of the soul. It is most consoling when the priest is able to remain with the dying during the death agony. The dying person should be frequently sprinkled with holy water, and the crucifix should be presented to him to kiss. The prayers for the departing soul should be recited for him. At the moment of death remember that the soul is now before God's tribunal, and pray for the departed with special fervor. To be present at a death bed, particularly where the death agony is severe, is the best of penitential sermons and the best means to induce us seriously to consider our eternal salvation. The thought that it will be our unavoidable fate to die should ever remain present in our minds, so that by its salutary effects we may be prevented from falling into sin.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? On the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

2. What is Extreme Unction? (Answer as in Catechism.)

3. Why is it called the anointing of the sick? Because it is only received by the sick.

4. When man enters upon life what happens to him in holy Baptism? He is anointed so as to be cleansed from original sin.

5. And when he departs this life, what takes place by Extreme Unction? He is again anointed to be cleansed from the remains of sins.

6. Whence do we know that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ? We know this: 1. From Holy Scripture, and 2. From the doctrine of the Church.

7. What does Holy Scripture say of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? St. James, the apostle, writes: "Is any man sick amongst you?" (Etc., as in lesson.)

8. What does Holy Scripture not mention about this Sacrament? It does not say when and how Christ instituted it.

9. What, however, does the above mentioned passage by St. James prove? It proves that Jesus instituted Extreme Unction. Otherwise St. James could not have written about it.

10. Whence do we know further that Extreme Unction was instituted by Jesus? From the fact that it has invariably been the teaching of the Catholic Church.

11. How is this proved, for instance? Extreme Unction is found with Oriental sects of early origin, who retained this Sacrament when leaving the Church.

12. What does the Council of Trent say concerning the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? It says: "If any one says Extreme Unction is not a true Sacrament, instituted by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by St. James, but only a custom accepted by the Fathers, or a human invention, let him be anathema!"

13. What is the outward sign of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? The anointing with holy oil is the *matter,* and the prayer of the priest joined with it is the *form.*

14. How is Extreme Unction administered? (Answer as in Catechism.)

15. Where does the anointing take place? Upon the organs of the five senses, the eyes, ears, hands, feet, upon nose and mouth.

16. How may we sin with our eyes, for instance? By willingly looking at sinful objects.

17. How may we sin by our ears? By listening with gratification to evil, immodest discourses, songs, cursing, improper words.

18. How may we sin with our hands? By stealing, ill usage, murder, fraud, incendiarism, etc.

19. How may we sin by our feet? By going to places where sin is committed.

20. Who administers Extreme Unction? The priest.

21. What effects does Extreme Unction produce? (Answer as in lesson.)

22. Which, therefore, is its first effect? It increases sanctifying grace.

23. Why does it increase sanctifying grace? Because it is a Sacrament of the living.

24. When, therefore, can it be received? After our sins have been forgiven.

25. What is the second effect of Extreme Unction? It remits venial sins and those mortal sins which the sick man can no longer confess.

26. When, for instance, can a person no longer confess their sins? When they, through sickness, have become weak and speechless, when stricken down by accident, etc.

27. But if the sick man is able to confess, what must of course take place? He must confess his sins.

28. What must the sinner have, however, even if he can not confess his sins? A supernatural, perfect contrition.

29. Which is the third effect of Extreme Unction? It removes the remains of sins already forgiven.

30. What, therefore, remains from the sins already forgiven? Weakness of the will, inclination to evil, temporal punishment, fear on account of former sins, fear of death.

31. Which is the fourth effect? Extreme Unction fortifies the sick person: (a) To bear his sufferings patiently, (b) to overcome the temptations of the evil one, and (c) to meet death with Christian resignation.

32. How has Extreme Unction a beneficial effect upon the body? By establishing inward peace, a calm conscience, and the confidence that we are prepared for the great journey into eternity.

33. For what should persons be solicitous before their death? Not only for the settlement of their temporal affairs, but also for the welfare of their souls.

34. How do we care for our soul during sickness? By receiving the last Sacraments.

35. Why do so many persons fear to receive the last Sacraments? They imagine that then they must give up all hope to get well.

36. What should they consider rather? They should reflect that the reception of the last Sacraments is good for body and soul.

37. Who can receive Extreme Unction? Every Catholic who has come to the use of reason, and is in danger of death by sickness.

38. To whom can Extreme Unction not be given? To persons in danger of death from reasons other than sickness, as condemned criminals.

39. To what other persons can it not be given? To children under seven years of age, and those of unsound mind.

40. Is Extreme Unction as necessary to our salvation as baptism? No; it is not.

41. What, however, if an adult while seriously ill would not receive Extreme Unction? It would be an offense to the Holy Ghost.

42. How are we to receive Extreme Unction? We are to receive it: 1. In the state of grace. 2. With faith, hope, charity, and resignation to the will of God.

43. How must we put ourselves in a state of grace? By a good Confession and Communion.

44. What must we believe in receiving Extreme Unction? We must believe in general everything that God has revealed, but we must believe in particular that God has the power to assist us even in our greatest need.

45. What must we hope from God? We must hope: 1. That God will restore our health if it is expedient for the good of our soul. 2. That God will grant us the pardon of our sins.

46. Why ought we to recognize the love of God in our serious illness? Because He sends suffering for our good.

47. When God calls us out of this life, what will thereby be made an end of? To the sufferings and oppressions of this life.

48. If we prepare ourselves worthily for eternity, what will be our reward? Everlasting life.

49. When should we receive Extreme Unction? We should receive it, if possible, while still in our senses, after having received Confession and Communion.

50. Why does it say *if possible?* Because if, owing to unconsciousness, we can not confess our sins, or at least repent of them, we can not receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

51. To what risk is a person exposed who delays the reception of Extreme Unction? He exposes himself to the danger of being surprised by death and of dying in his sins.

52. How often can Extreme Unction be received? (Answer as in Catechism.)

53. What should be done when the last agony sets in? A blessed candle should be lighted, the dying person sprinkled with holy water, the crucifix handed to him to kiss, and prayers for the dying should be recited.

XXII.—Holy Orders.

In the course of the Catechism we come to-day to the doctrine of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. There has never been a religion that did not have priests for the service and the worship of the Divinity, because everywhere and at all times the necessity of persons ordained and privileged to offer sacrifice to the Godhead was recognized. In the Old Law God Himself ordained Aaron and his successors who were to offer up the prefiguring sacrifice. For the new sacrifice in the New Law of grace there must, therefore, be a perpetuated priesthood, appointed by Christ, to solemnize continuously the Sacrifice of Redemption instituted by Him for all times.

On whom did Christ confer the priesthood? On His apostles, and through the apostles upon their successors, bishops and priests. The word apostle means ambassador, messenger. As a matter of fact the apostles were the messengers of the Saviour, for Jesus said to them: "As the Father hath sent me, so do I send you. Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen!" Christ needed apostles, messengers, for if the Church was to continue until the end of the world, there had to be those who would continue the teaching office and the office of priest and shepherd.

Could the priesthood, therefore, be allowed to end with the death of the apostles?

No; no more than the Church was to end at their death.

If, however, the priestly dignity and authority was to continue in the Church, it had to be conferred by the apostles upon their successors.

How was the priesthood continued?

By the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

The priestly power as it was first possessed by the apostles was a supernatural and divine one, as follows:

1. From the power to change the bread and wine into the true Body and the true Blood of Jesus Christ.

2. From the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them at Pentecost in the form of fiery tongues.

No human being possesses the first named power of himself, nor

can one impart this power to another except in a supernatural manner, and this takes place in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Through it the priestly power continues spiritually in the New Law, as in the Old Law it descended by natural inheritance from the high priest Aaron.

While the first five Sacraments are instituted for the salvation of individual persons, Holy Orders is necessary for the welfare of the whole Church. Sacraments require administration by the priesthood. As a consequence the priesthood is necessary in the Church, as also the Sacrament of Holy Orders through which the priesthood is continued.

What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is that Sacrament which communicates to those who receive it the full power of priesthood, together with a special grace to use this power well. Holy Orders is a Sacrament, for there is 1. An outward sign; 2. An invisible grace, and 3. It is instituted by Jesus Christ.

What are the principal powers of priesthood?

1. The power to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord; and 2. The power to forgive sins.

The offering up of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the centre of the Catholic Church and of all her divine worship. All consecrations have more or less reference to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Therefore, the real power of the priests is the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the changing of the bread and wine into the Sacred Body and Blood of Jesus. The priests have, furthermore, the power to baptize, to forgive sins, to administer the Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Matrimony, etc. Confirmation and Holy Orders can, as a rule, only be administered by the bishops. Priests have also the power to bless and to consecrate.

Is there in Holy Orders also a visible sign which indicates the communicating of the invisible power and grace?

Yes; there are several: the imposition of hands and the prayer of the bishop, and the handing of the chalice with wine, and of the paten with bread.

Who can validly administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

Bishops only, who have received this power by a particular consecration. The apostles consecrated deacons, Paul consecrated Timothy and Titus as bishops, with the commission that they also should consecrate others. This power to consecrate was limited

to the bishops as the direct successors of the apostles. Tradition proves that in all times the administration of Holy Orders was reserved to the bishops.

According to theologians, such as Chrysostom, Epiphanius, and others, the principal difference between bishops and priests consists in this, that the former alone can confer consecration.

Can not also civil authorities or Christian governments confer spiritual powers?

No; they can not confer spiritual powers, because they possess none themselves. Christ granted His authority to the apostles and their successors, the bishops, who are thus authorized to conduct and rule the Church of God.

Can a priest be deprived of his ordination?

No; he can as little be deprived of ordination as of baptism, because it imprints an indelible character upon the soul.

Are there other orders besides those of priest and bishop?

Yes; there are others which are preparatory degrees to the priesthood.

Which are these other orders?

1. The four minor orders by which those who receive them are qualified for various offices connected with the Divine Service.

2. The order of subdeacon, who has to assist the deacon when serving at the altar; and

3. The order of deacon, who assists the priest at the altar, and helps him also in baptizing, preaching, and giving Holy Communion.

Who can and should embrace the state of priesthood?

He only who is called to it by God.

The Church requires of those who desire to receive Holy Orders purity of morals and the necessary knowledge, prudence, and other qualifications. She imposes a certain age, and does not admit to the priesthood any who have corporal or spiritual infirmities.

What is the tonsure?

The tonsure is not an order, but a mark of the clerical state. On the day of ordination the bishop cuts a little hair from five places on the candidate's head to show that the young man gives himself up to God. That is called the tonsure.

What do lay persons owe to those in the ecclesiastical state?

The priestly dignity and power requires respect and reverence.

Already in the Old Law God said: "Fear God the Lord with thy whole soul and respect His priests." In another passage Holy

Scripture says, "Whoso despises you (the priests), despises me (God)."

Application.—Always show due respect and submission to priests as the representatives of God and the dispensers of His holy mysteries; and should you happen to perceive in any of them human failings, do not be scandalized, but "Whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not" (Matt. xxiii. 3). Pray frequently to the Lord of the harvest that He may send laborers into His vineyard.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

2. What are priests? Priests are those persons destined for the service of God, who offer up the Holy Sacrifice.

3. Who was ordained to the priesthood in the Old Law? Aaron and his descendants.

4. What sacrifices did they have in the Old Law? There were burnt and food offerings, thanksgiving and precatory sacrifices, sacrifices of expiation and atonement.

5. How many sacrifices are there in the New Law? There is one only.

6. Which is that? The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

7. Who instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? Our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

8. With what words did He institute it? With the words: "Do this in commemoration of me."

9. How long is the sacrifice instituted by Jesus to last? The sacrifice instituted by Jesus shall endure until the end of the world.

10. What, then, must there be until the end of the world in order that the Sacrifice of the New Law of grace may be continually offered up? There must be priests.

11. On whom did Christ Himself confer the priesthood? On His apostles.

12. What is the meaning of the word apostle? Apostle means messenger.

13. Who sent the apostles forth? Our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

14. Where did He send them? Over the whole world.

15. Why did He send them forth? To teach all nations, to baptize and lead them to salvation.

16. With what words did He send them forth? With the words: "As the Father hath sent me, so do I send you. Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father," etc.

17. Was the priesthood to end with the death of the apostles? No; no more than the Church was to end at their death.

18. What threefold office did Christ confer upon His apostles? The office of teacher, priest, and shepherd.

19. What did Jesus promise to them before His ascension into heaven? He promised to them the Holy Ghost.

20. When did Jesus fulfil this promise? At Pentecost.

21. Since Christ desired that the Church instituted by Him should continue until the end of the world, what must also continue? The priesthood.

22. Which Sacrament did Christ institute for this purpose? The Sacrament of Holy Orders.

23. What power did Jesus give to His apostles? Supernatural and divine power.

24. How can you prove this to me? Jesus gave His apostles the power to change bread and wine into His true Body and true Blood.

25. Has a man of his own nature the power to change bread and wine into the true Body and true Blood of Jesus Christ? No; no man has this power of his own nature.

26. How is this power given to man? Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

27. How was the priestly dignity transmitted in the Old Law? By natural descent from Aaron.

28. What difference is there between the Sacrament of Holy Orders and the other Sacraments? The other Sacraments are instituted for the salvation of individual men, but Holy Orders for the welfare of the whole Church.

29. Why? Because for the administration of the Sacraments consecrated priests are necessary.

30. What is Holy Orders? Holy Orders is that Sacrament which communicates to those who receive it the full power of priesthood, together with a special grace to discharge their sacred duties well.

31. Why is Holy Orders a Sacrament? Because there is the outward sign, the invisible grace, and it was instituted by Jesus Christ.

32. What are the principal powers of priesthood? 1. The power to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Our Lord; and 2. The power to forgive sins.

33. Which, accordingly, is the exclusive or chief power of the priest? The power to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

34. Which is another power of the priest? The power to forgive sins.

35. Which other Sacraments can the priest also dispense? The Holy Sacraments of Baptism, of the Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, and Matrimony.

36. Which Sacraments, as a rule, are only administered by the bishop? The Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders.

37. What other function is exercised by the priest? That of announcing the word of God by sermons and in Christian doctrine.

38. What further power have the priests in virtue of their consecration? The power to bless and to consecrate.

39. Is there in Holy Orders also a visible sign which indicates the communicating of the invisible power and grace? Yes; there are several: the imposition of hands and the prayer of the bishop, and the handing of the Chalice with wine, and of the Paten with bread.

40. What does the handing of the Chalice with wine and the Paten with bread signify? It indicates the power to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to change the bread and wine into the true Body and true Blood of Jesus Christ.

41. Who can validly administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders? Bishops only, who have received this power by a particular consecration.

42. Did the apostles exercise this power? Yes; the apostles exercised this power.

43. Whom did Paul consecrate bishops? Titus and Timothy.

44. And what commission did he give to them? The commission also to consecrate others.

45. What outward sign is observed at the consecration of a bishop? The hands of the bishop and also his head are anointed.

46. What should be the character of those desiring to enter the priesthood? It should be irreproachable.

47. What does that mean? They must not be reproached with any serious fault.

48. Can a priest be deprived of his ordination? (Answer as in Catechism.)

49. Why can not a priest be deprived of his ordination? Because it leaves an indelible mark upon the soul.

50. Are there any other Orders besides those of priest and bishop? Yes; there are others which are preparatory degrees to the priesthood.

51. Which are those other orders? 1. The Four Minor Orders by which those who receive them are qualified for various offices connected with the divine service. 2. The order of subdeacon, who has to assist the deacon when serving at the altar; and 3. The order of deacon, who immediately assists the priest at the altar, and helps him also in baptizing, preaching, and giving Holy Communion.

52. Who can and should embrace the ecclesiastical state? He only who is called to it by God.

53. What does the Church require of those who aspire to the priesthood? They must possess proper age, purity of morals, and the necessary knowledge.

54. When is the intention to become a priest a good and noble one? When a person desires to be a priest for the honor of God and His Church, and to promote the salvation of the faithful and his own sanctification.

55. What is the Tonsure? The Tonsure is not an order, but only a mark of the clerical state.

56. How does the bishop administer the Tonsure? By cutting the hair in five places on the head of the candidate, in form of a crown.

57. What significance has this act? It reminds us of the crown of thorns of our divine Saviour, and of the difficult vocation which the priest has taken upon himself.

58. What should the faithful do in order to obtain worthy priests and pastors? They should often and fervently pray to God for that grace, and render themselves worthy of it by their love of the Church and respect for the priesthood.

59. By what word do we denote the dignity of the priest? By the word "Reverend."

60. What does the priest's dignity require from us? It requires respect, submission, and obedience.

XXIII.—The Sacrament of Matrimony.

What is the Sacrament of Matrimony?

Matrimony is a Sacrament through which two persons, man and woman, are united to one another in lawful marriage and receive from God the grace to fulfil the duties of their state faithfully. Matrimony may be regarded in different ways. In its principal aspect it is the natural union between man and woman to attain the aim of matrimony, the propagation of the human race.

As such an union it rests upon an agreement which is entered into by two persons. This union to ensure the proper raising and training of children must be stable and indissolvable. Matrimony is not at all necessary for every one; indeed, the unwedded virginal life, when chosen according to God's will, is preferable and better than the married state. That God Himself instituted matrimony, the union of man and woman, may be seen from the history of the first man's creation. God Himself presented Eve to Adam as his helpmate. God Himself blessed the first marriage when He said, "Grow and multiply."

Among pagans, woman had been utterly degraded and despised.

Christ restored marriage to its original purity and aim as God had instituted it in paradise. He even raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament. Christ ordained:

1. The unity of matrimony, i. e., the union of one man and one woman.

2. The indissolubility of marriage. "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

Christ not only restored marriage to its original purity and high standard, but He sanctified it by His presence at the marriage of Cana, as also by performing there His first miracle, changing water into wine. A type of wedded union is the union of Jesus Christ as heavenly Bridegroom with the Church, His spouse. Man is the superior of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church.

Marriage in the New Law is not only a contract toward a natural union, but it is at the same time a Sacrament which bestows grace upon the faithful for the fulfilment of the duties of this state.

How do we know that matrimony is a Sacrament?

We know it, 1. Because St. Paul teaches so when he calls matri-

mony in the Church *a great Sacrament.* 2. Because the Catholic Church has always believed and taught so.

Christian marriage is distinguished over a purely natural union because it is a Sacrament. The wedded pair should, according to the words of St. Paul, love one another as Christ loved His Church. This, however, is a supernatural love, and for it married people require divine grace. For this reason Christ has bestowed this grace upon matrimony; it is a great mystery in Christ, because it is a symbol of Christ's union with the Church. The entrance into matrimony takes place by an outward sign to which is attached an interior grace. It is in this manner instituted by Christ, and is, therefore, in truth a Sacrament.

Tradition, moreover, places the fact that matrimony is a Sacrament beyond all doubt. Tertullian names matrimony with Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist amongst the Holy Sacraments. Theologians, such as St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Chrysostom, and others distinguish in matrimony the outward sign and the inward grace joined thereto, and call it a Sacrament. Others teach that Christ sanctified matrimony at the marriage of Cana and imparted to it His divine grace. They attack the heresies of the Agnostics and Manicheans, who rejected marriage, and they confirm the belief and doctrine of the Church that matrimony is in truth one of the seven Sacraments. Thus Christ not only sanctified the union of married persons, but also the relation between them and their children, to whom they appear as the true representatives of Christ and His Church.

How is this Sacrament received?

For the valid conclusion of marriage, bridegroom and bride must declare before a priest and two witnesses that they take each other for husband and wife, whereupon the priest blesses their union. Marriage must be preceded by the publication of the banns, and by the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar. Marriage should, as a rule, be celebrated in the forenoon in the Church and during Holy Mass. Entrance into the state of matrimony is an event of the greatest importance for the natural and supernatural welfare of the parties. The Church has, therefore, provided a special Mass for the celebration of nuptials, in which a special blessing is said over the bridal couple. All those earnestly concerned about their welfare will, therefore, arrange to get married during Mass.

As marriage is a two-sided contract, made between two persons capable of making a contract, it is, above all, necessary to make sure of the consent of both parties. This is done by the priest by asking the question first of the bridegroom and then of the bride: N., wilt thou take N. here present for thy lawful wife (husband) according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?

Both parties having satisfactorily answered this question, the priest requires them to kneel down before him and to give each other the right hand, to receive the Church's blessing.

The priest now lays the stole, emblem of priestly authority, upon the locked hands of the bridal couple and pronounces the formula of blessing: "*Ideo matrimonium per vos contractum confirmo, ratifico et benedico in nomine Patris,*" etc.

After the blessing, the priest may address a few words of exhortation to the bridegroom, the bride, and those present in the church, and call upon the bridal couple particularly to love, esteem, and honor one another, to preserve conjugal fidelity, to be solicitous for one another, to give a good example, etc.

What are the duties of married persons?

1. They should live with each other in peace and conjugal fidelity until death separates them.

2. They should edify each other by leading a holy life.

3. They should bring up their children in the fear of God.

4. The husband should treat his wife with kindness, should support and cherish her, the wife should obey her husband in all that is just and honorable.

Married persons should live together in harmony. Both should strive for that which is right and good. Instead of harmony, we may also say unity. The opposite of unity and harmony is discord, disunion, quarreling, dispute.

Where peace reigns there is blessing; where discontent rules there is unhappiness and trouble.

Where there is discord and discontent, the household does not prosper, the children do not turn out well. Furthermore, married persons should love one another. This love, however, should not be animal or sensual, but supernatural; it should resemble Christ's love for His Church; it should have reference to God. A further duty is conjugal fidelity, the violation of which is called adultery, and is one of the most grievous sins, for which reason we find it condemned immediately after murder in the ten commandments.

Fidelity commands each party to remain with the other until death separates them.

Married persons should lead a pious, Godfearing, honest, virtuous life, and so edify and encourage one another to do good. They should strive to lay aside their failings; one should seek to improve faults of the other by meekness and patience; they should be zealous in prayer. and frequently receive the Holy Sacraments. The proper bringing up of the children has already been spoken of under the fourth commandment.

To the general duties are added special individual duties.

(a) As head of the family, the husband is responsible for the support of his wife and family. He must support, care for, and protect them. He should not treat his wife harshly, unkindly or cruelly, or like a servant, but as a partner of his life and a helpmate.

(b) The wife owes to her husband respect and obedience in all things that are right and just. "As the Church is subject to Christ, so must wives be subject to their husbands in all things." The wife has to look after the household, and make home cheerful by her diligence and cleanliness, and by economy help to increase what her husband earns.

What should people who intend to enter the married state bear in mind?

1. They should not thoughtlessly enter into an engagement to marry.

2. They should be properly instructed and free from impediments.

3. They should live innocently in the state of engagement.

4. They should enter the marriage state with a pure and holy intention.

5. Before they marry they should make a good Confession and receive Communion. Matrimony is a Sacrament of the living, and can, therefore, only be received in the state of grace.

Are people bound to keep their promise to marry each other?

Yes; under pain of grievous sin, unless released by mutual agreement.

What sin do they commit who receive the Sacrament of Matrimony in the state of mortal sin?

They render themselves guilty of sacrilege, and, therefore, unworthy of the divine graces and blessings.

How many kinds of impediments are there?

There are two kinds:

1. Such as render marriage *unlawful.*
2. Such as render it *null.*

There are certain conditions which must be complied with for the conclusion of a lawful marriage. These conditions are founded partly upon the laws of nature and partly upon the laws of God. If any one of the conditions required for the lawful conclusion of a marriage is not complied with, then we say there is an impediment. The Church, as declared by the Council of Trent, has the right to establish rules for the lawful conclusion of marriage. The established impediments are, as before mentioned, 1. Those which render the consummation of the marriage unlawful; and 2. Those which render it invalid and null. If an impediment making marriage *unlawful* exists and the ceremony is performed nevertheless, a sin is committed, but the marriage is valid.

If, however, marriage is entered into in spite of an impediment that makes it null, then the marriage is invalid.

Impediments making the marriage unlawful are:

1. Prohibition in regard to certain times;
2. Diversity of religious belief·
3. Betrothal;
4. Simple vows;
5. Complete ignorance of religious trutn.

The times when marriages can not be celebrated are from the beginning of Advent until the Epiphany, and from Ash Wednesday until Low Sunday. Diversity of religion concerns marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, though baptized. Betrothal: One who has pledged his troth to one person can not marry another until the former engagement is broken off by consent. Simple vows: Vows which are not solemn vows of perpetual chastity, of celibacy, the vow to enter a religious order or to become a priest. Ignorance of religious truths: Those ignorant of the fundamental truths of religion must seek instruction before getting married. This is directed so as to insure a proper religious training of their children.

The principal impediments rendering marriage null or invalid are:

1. Coercion;
2. Defect of age;
3. Consanguinity and affinity;
4. A previous marriage tie still existing;
5. The greater degrees of Holy Orders;

6. Solemn Vows.

7. The prohibition concerning the marriage of Catholics with unbaptized persons;

8. Spiritual affinity.

Coercion: If undue stress is brought to bear on man or woman, or if either is forced into marrying some one against his or her will by threats of injury, as, for instance, of being disinherited, etc., the marriage is invalid.

Defect of age: Boys under fourteen, girls under twelve can not enter into wedlock.

Consanguinity: The voice of nature condemns the union of persons nearly related to one another, and their children are not unfrequently physically or mentally afflicted. A Papal dispensation is required for the marriage of first cousins; in the case of more remote relationship episcopal dispensation is sufficient.

Affinity results from previous marriage; the survivor can not marry the blood relations of the deceased party. For instance, a man can not marry the mother, sister, or daughter by a former husband of his deceased wife, and similar restrictions apply to the woman's case. No affinity, however, exists between the blood relations of the several parties; a man may, for instance, marry the sister of his brother's wife.

Previous marriage: None of the parties to a marriage can marry again during the lifetime of the other. Should a woman, believing her husband to be dead, marry again, she must leave her second husband if she discovers the first one to be still living.

Holy Orders and solemn vows: Clerics, beginning with the order of subdeacon, religious who have taken the vow of celibacy, can not enter the state of marriage.

Difference of creed: A Christian can not marry a Jew, a Mohammedan, or other unbaptized person.

Spiritual affinity is contracted by sponsors in baptism or confirmation.

From some of these impediments dispensation may be had from the Church authorities; for others, for instance, the marriage tie or for marriage between stepfather and stepdaughter, between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, and some other natural impediments, however, dispensations are never granted. The Church discourages marriages where impediments exist, and according to the degree of the impediment puts greater or lesser obstacles in the

way of the parties concerned. The prohibitions on account of impediments are made for very good reasons and with great wisdom, and have mostly in view the natural welfare of mankind.

There are also impediments on account of public decency; for instance, widows and widowers should allow a certain interval to elapse before concluding another marriage.

It is the duty of those seeking marriage to inform the priest of any impediments or of facts that may lead to the discovery of impediments.

It is for the sake of ascertaining any impediments that the banns of marriage are published three times in the church, and any one knowing of an impediment that is not known to the priest is in conscience bound to inform the priest.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

2. What is the Sacrament of Matrimony? Matrimony is that Sacrament whereby two persons, man and woman, marry each other and receive from God the grace faithfully to fulfil the duties of their state.

3. Who reinstated marriage in the New Law to its original purity? Our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

4. How did He accomplish this? By raising marriage to a Sacrament.

5. What does Christ command concerning marriage? He commands: 1. Its unity. 2. Its indissolubility.

6. What were you told concerning the unity of marriage? In matrimony a man can only have one wife, and vice versa.

7. In what way did Jesus sanctify particularly marriage? By assisting at the marriage of Cana, with His mother and His disciples, and there working His first miracle.

8. How do we know that matrimony is a Sacrament? 1. St. Paul teaches so, who calls matrimony in the Church *a great Sacrament* (Eph. v. 32). 2. Because the Church has at all times believed and taught so.

9. What duty is imposed upon married persons by the Sacrament of Matrimony? They must love one another.

10. What kind of love should this be, however? It should be a supernatural love.

11. What do the married couple require for this supernatural love? They require the grace of God for this.

12. Where can this grace only be received? In the Sacrament of Matrimony.

13. Who is the lawful dispenser of the Sacrament of Matrimony? The priest.

14. What is required of persons who wish to enter the married state? They should be thoroughly instructed in the truths of the Christian religion, particularly those concerning the duties of the married state.

15. How should we prepare ourselves to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony? By receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.

16. Why must the Sacraments be received beforehand? Because matrimony is a Sacrament of the living.

17. We have spoken of impediments to marriage. What constitutes an impediment? An impediment is something which deters or hinders us from doing anything.

18. How many kinds of impediments are there? There are two kinds: 1. Such as render marriage unlawful, as the forbidden times, the simple vow of chastity, etc. 2. Such as render it also null: as for instance, consanguinity, affinity to the fourth degree inclusively, spiritual relationship, one of the parties being not baptized, etc.

19. Upon what are impediments grounded? Upon the natural law, the law of God and of the Church.

20. What must be done where impediments exist? A dispensation must be applied for either from the bishop or the Pope.

21. What expedient does the Church make use of in order that impediments may be discovered? The banns are published three times.

XXIV.—The Sacramentals.

We come now to the doctrine of sacramentals.

What do we usually understand by sacramentals?

By sacramentals we understand, 1. All those things which the Church blesses or consecrates for the divine service, or for our own pious use, as holy water, oil, salt, bread, wine, palms, etc.; 2. Also the exorcisms, blessings, and consecrations used by the Church.

The Church consecrates some objects for use in divine worship, as the sacred vessels, the paschal candle, etc., and others for the pious use of the faithful, as medals, rosaries, holy water.

The word sacramental is often used in a wider sense and added to special prayers and practices of the Church, as, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, the *Confiteor* or public confession, the sign of the cross, etc.

Why are blessed objects called sacramentals?

They are called sacramentals because they resemble the Sacraments, though they are essentially different from them. The sacramentals resemble the Sacraments in this, that an outward sign takes place to accomplish an inward spiritual effect. They are, therefore, perceptible marks of a sacred thing. They gain their power, furthermore, not alone from our devotion in using them, but also from the blessing of the Church.

The difference between the sacramentals and the Sacraments consists:

1. In their institution.
2. In their effects.
3. In their mode of operation.
4. In regard to their necessity.

1. In their institution. The Sacraments were instituted by God, but the sacramentals were instituted by the Church. The Church can not institute a Sacrament, but she can introduce sacramentals, which are the various blessings, suiting the requirements and desires of the faithful.

2. In their effects. Through the Sacraments superior graces and interior sanctification are imparted to us. The sacramentals can never produce this effect, but only obtain for us smaller graces;

i. e., protection from the assaults of the evil spirit, penitential disposition, remission of venial sins, turning away of temporal evil.

3. In their mode of operation. The Sacraments, if worthily received, effect immediate inward sanctification; whereas the sacramentals operate through the prayers and blessing of the Church, and it is left to the wisdom and grace of God as to whether or not that is obtained for which the Church asks. We can not say, therefore, that a sacramental always or infallibly effects a certain grace.

4. In regard to their necessity. The Sacraments are, in general, necessary and commanded by God; the sacramentals are only recommended by the Church as useful and salutary.

Who instituted the sacramentals?

The Catholic Church instituted the sacramentals in virtue of the authority received from Christ to bless, to consecrate, and to exorcise. Christ Himself gave His disciples the authority and the commission to drive out evil spirits, to heal the sick, etc. The priestly authority includes the power to bless, as you have learned in the explanation of Holy Orders. The custom of the Church to consecrate and to bless is founded upon apostolic tradition, as well as upon the example of Jesus Christ Himself.

"Every creature is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (I. Tim. iv. 5).

In her blessings the Church makes use of the sign of the cross. By His crucifixion Jesus conquered the devil, whose influence over mankind has, however, not been completely taken from him. Through the cross even to this day the evil spirit and his power is overcome. Hence also the exorcism which the Church so often makes use of in her benedictions. The Church in her blessings uses also holy water, which itself is a sacramental.

At the more solemn consecrations anointing is applied, emblematical of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

Why does the Church consecrate or bless the things belonging to the divine service?

The Church consecrates them:

1. To sanctify and dedicate them peculiarly to the divine service.

2. To render them more venerable and salutary to us.

Even in the Old Law God ordered to be consecrated the holy tent, the vessels for divine worship, the vestments of the high priest. Thus, also, in the New Law the objects used for divine worship are consecrated, like churches, altars, vestments, chalices, bells, etc. It

is befitting that that which serves for sacred purposes and divine worship should be withdrawn from ordinary worldly usage and be devoted exclusively to the service of God by solemn consecration. Everything consecrated by the Church and intended for sacred purposes should appeal to our sense of reverence. This applies particularly to the sacred vessels and the linen (corporal) which come in direct contact with the body and blood of the Lord.

Why does the Church bless also palms, bread, wine, the fruits of the field, etc?

The Church blesses these things:

1. After the example of Jesus Christ.

2. That "to them that love God, all things may work together unto good"; and,

3. That God's blessings may be poured out over all.

1. The Church does this after the example of Christ. Jesus took the children in His arms, laid His hands upon them and blessed them. When Jesus fed the thousands in the desert, He looked up to heaven and blessed the loaves of bread and the fishes.

The Church consecrates not only objects which serve for divine worship, or such for individual use, as palms, holy water, medals, rosaries, crucifixes, etc., but also food, like meat, bread, wine, fruits of the field, etc. She blesses houses to invoke the divine blessing upon the persons who will dwell within them, etc. The things created by God should serve not only to satisfy our earthly needs, but they should invite us to praise, gratitude, and love for God, their creator. By sin the curse of God extended to all the creatures of the earth, and they need, therefore, to be blessed and consecrated by the Church in order to serve for our best welfare.

Why should we especially make devout use of the sacramentals?

Because we participate through them in the prayer and blessing of the whole Church, in the name of which the priest consecrates and blesses.

If Christ said of the prayer of belief and confidence: "Everything that you shall ask the Father in my name, that will he give unto you," and if it is said of the parental blessing even that it builds houses for the children, then certainly the Church's blessing must be of far greater avail. In Holy Orders the priest's hands are anointed, and the bishop ordains in the name of God that everything that these hands bless shall be blessed. When using objects consecrated by the Church for their intended purpose, we become

participants of the blessing and fruits of the Church's prayers. Even persons who use them unconsciously derive benefit from consecrated objects, e. g., blessed medals hung round children's necks.

Has, therefore, the prayer of the Church a particular efficacy?

Yes; the prayer of the Church has a particular efficacy because her prayer is ever united to the prayer of Jesus and His saints.

The Church is, as the apostle says, the mystical body of the Lord; she is the bride of the Lord, who will remain with her until the end of the world. Her prayer is the universal prayer of all who belong to the kingdom of God, the united prayer of the Church militant and triumphant. Ought not the prayer of the saints to be particularly pleasing to God? Christ Himself, the Mediator between God and man, prays with the Church, and thus we may expect that the Church's prayers will be heard. Christ made His Church the custodian and dispenser of His treasury of grace; she is in charge to dispense blessings from the plenitude of the treasure confided to her. Her blessing, therefore, can not be without effect.

What does the Church usually pray for when she consecrates or blesses?

She prays that God's judgments may be averted, also for protection against the devil, for peace, blessing, well being of soul and body, etc. Sacramentals may be intended for different purposes, for instance:

a. On the feast of Candlemas (February 2) the Church blesses candles, the priest asking for the grace of interior illumination and animation to do good.

b. On Ash Wednesday the Church blesses ashes, as a symbol of contrition and penance, and the priest prays for those who, in the spirit of humility and penance, have their heads strewn with blessed ashes, for the remission of all sins, and for the reward promised to the penitent.

c. On the feast of St. Blaise candles are blessed and laid upon the throats of the faithful with the words, "Through the intercession of the holy Bishop and Martyr St. Blaise may the Lord deliver and preserve you from all throat trouble."

d. On other occasions the Church prays that temporal ills may be averted: damage by lightning, pestilence, hailstorms, etc.

e. On Palm Sunday the Church consecrates palms to commemorate the glorious entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

f. Churches and chapels are consecrated with imposing cere-

monies so as to invoke the grace of God for those that will worship in them.

g. Cemeteries, burial places are consecrated to obtain the peace of God for the deceased that will be buried there.

h. The consecration or blessing of the bells (chimes) takes place so that their calling to the service of God may be heeded by the faithful.

i. A blessing and consecration of persons takes place also. Thus, the consecration of aspirants to religious orders, the anointing of kings and princes, as was formerly the custom, the blessing of children belonging to different sodalities, and the churching of women.

How should we use holy water?

A pious Christian sprinkles himself with holy water at home as well as in church, and begs of God that through the blood of Jesus Christ he may be more and more purified and be protected in all dangers.

We must mention here certain objects that should be highly venerated and sacred to all Christians, and these objects are the relics or remains of the saints. We should be careful, however, through what source and how we become possessed of relics, as sometimes they may not be genuine.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the sacramentals.

2. What do we understand by sacramentals? By sacramentals we understand: 1. Objects which the Church blesses or consecrates for the divine service or for the use of the faithful. 2. The exorcisms, blessings, and consecrations by the Church.

3. What does the Church make use of in divine worship? She uses bells, altars, vestments, candles, chalices, etc.

4. What does the Church bless for the faithful? Medals, rosaries, palms, statues, scapulars, holy water, etc.

5. What resemblance is there between the sacramentals and the Sacraments? An outward sign, with aim for inward sanctification, takes place in both.

6. As what, therefore, did I designate the sacramentals? As perceptible signs of a sacred matter.

7. Whence have the sacramentals their power? Through the intercession and blessings of the Church.

8. What is the difference between sacramentals and Sacraments? The difference is found: 1. In their institution. 2. In their effect. 3. In their mode of operation. 4. In regard to their necessity.

9. Who instituted the sacramentals? The Catholic Church, by virtue of the authority received from Christ to consecrate and to bless.

10. Can the Church institute Sacraments? No; the Church can not do that.

11. Are the effects of the sacramentals as great as the effects of the Sacraments? No; their effects are not as great.

12. What are the effects of the sacramentals? They grant: 1. Protection against the temptation of the evil spirit. 2. A contrite and penitential disposition. 3. Remission of venial sins. 4. The averting of temporary ills.

13. What is the difference between Sacraments and sacramentals in regard to their effect? The Sacraments have a certain effect; the effects of the sacramentals, on the contrary, depend on the grace and wisdom of God.

14. Are the sacramentals as indispensably necessary to salvation as the Sacraments? No; they are not indispensably necessary to salvation.

15. What are they, however? They are profitable and salutary.

16. Upon what is the priestly authority founded? It is founded: 1. Upon apostolic tradition. 2. Upon the example of Christ Himself.

17. What power did Jesus give to His apostles and disciples? The power to drive out evil spirits, heal the sick, etc.

18. What did Jesus bless, for instance? He blessed the bread and fishes in the desert wherewith he fed the thousands. He took children in His arms, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them.

19. By what sign does the Church bless? By the sign of the cross.

20. Why does the Church bless with the sign of the cross? Because Jesus conquered the devil on the cross.

21. What else does the Church use in her blessings? Holy water.

22. Why does the Church consecrate objects used for divine worship? (Answer as in lesson.)

23. Why does the Church bless bread, wine, fruits of the field, etc.? The Church does this: 1. After the example of Jesus Christ. 2. That these things may work good to them that love God. 3. So that God's blessing may be poured out over all.

24. What should take place in every Christian family before and after meals? Prayers are said (grace).

25. Why does the Church bless houses? She prays God to protect and bless all those dwelling therein.

26. What is done to the priest's hands at his ordination? The bishop anoints them, directing: "That everything these hands shall bless shall be blessed in the name of the Lord."

27. Do the sacramentals benefit also those persons who make use of them unconsciously? Yes; for instance, little children are benefited by wearing blessed medals, scapulars, etc.

28. Has the prayer of the Church a particular efficacy? Yes; the prayer of the Church has a particular efficacy because her prayers are united to the prayers of Christ and His saints.

29. We know, however, that Jesus Christ is God; how can we say that He prays to God? Jesus is really God, but He is also our Mediator and Intercessor with God the Father, and as such He prays to God for us.

30. What does the Church usually pray for when she consecrates or blesses? She prays for the averting of the judgments of God, for protection against the devil, for peace, blessing, well-being of soul and body, etc.

31. Of how many kinds are God's punishments? They are of two kinds: eternal and temporal.

32. With what temporal punishments may God visit mankind? With sickness, war, deformity, famine, floods, lightning, etc.

33. For what does the Church pray when she blesses or consecrates? She prays that such temporal punishments may be averted.

34. What have we to fear from the evil spirit? 1. His works—sin. 2. His temptations.

35. How are we protected against the evil spirit? By the pious use of sacramentals.

36. What further blessings does the Church pray for? For peace in the Church, peace between nations, for blessing and well-being of soul and body.

37. Are the sacramentals all consecrated and intended for the same end? No; sacramentals are intended for various purposes.

38. Tell me of some sacramentals for special purposes? The candles blessed on Candlemas, the ashes blessed on Ash Wednesday, the blessing on St. Blaise day, etc.

39. Which of the sacramentals is used most frequently? The sacramental most used is holy water.

40. What application should be made of this instruction? Objects blessed by the Church, especially holy water, should be used with due reverence and devotion, so that, assisted by the prayer and blessing of the Church, our salvation may be worked more safely and more easily.

XXV.—Prayer.

In our last religious instruction we treated of the doctrine of sacramentals, and to-day we shall take up the doctrine of prayer.

What is prayer?

Prayer is the raising up of our minds and hearts to God, either to praise and thank Him or to beg His grace, and, therefore, it is divided into prayer of praise, prayer of thanksgiving, and prayer of petition.

In prayer our soul, our heart, our mind are raised up from earth to heaven. God, as an omnipresent spirit, is present everywhere, in all places, only we believe that God is more especially enthroned in all His glory in heaven; hence we say the soul is raised up to God in prayer. Prayer, furthermore, is a conversation with God, our heavenly Father, in which we bring to Him our petitions with child-like confidence to obtain from Him assistance and consolation. Prayer presupposes a dependence upon God. Man acknowledges his helplessness, misery, and inability to do anything without God. This consciousness of our weakness is expressed by prayer.

The infinite majesty and glory of God requires that we should praise Him who is made known to us partly by His works, but even more so by the grace of faith.

Our prayer, further, should be a prayer of thanksgiving. To this we are invited not only by the works of God, which He has created for our good, but by the help which God has already given for our eternal salvation and will still give. God's blessings are not only immeasurably great, but numberless. The knowledge of our weakness and inability calls upon us to turn to the divine power and goodness which can alone help us in all necessities. We are even commanded to make petition; for Holy Scripture says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you" (Luke xi. 9).

Is prayer necessary?

Prayer is necessary for salvation. Every one who would be saved must pray. With truth, then, may we compare prayer to a ladder by which we ascend to heaven, to the key which opens heaven to us, to balsam that heals our wounds. It is as necessary for our souls as is the air for our earthly existence. As in nature, all vegetable life

withers when no rain falls, so is our spiritual life destroyed without prayer.

Why is prayer necessary?

Because God has commanded it, and because without it we do not receive the graces necessary to persevere to the end. Prayer, therefore, is expressly commanded by God. It is not merely counseled. It matters not whether it pleases us or not, we must pray. It is made our duty and obligation. There are numerous Scriptural passages on this subject of which we will give a few here. "God is thy Lord and him only shalt thou worship." "Call upon me and I will hear you." "Pray, lest ye fall into temptation." "Pray without ceasing." Jesus not only commands us to pray, but He also teaches us how we should pray, and Holy Scripture says of Him that He Himself, the Son of God, frequently passed His time in prayer. Prayer was practised by the apostles and saints. All nations, at all times, and in all places, have prayed. The savages pray in their way, because it is felt to be a necessity by mankind.

The prayers which we say in the name of Jesus, and with the assistance of the Holy Ghost, are the recipients of sublime promises and of great power.

What are the principal fruits of prayer?

Prayer, 1. Unites us to God; 2. Makes us inclined to God; 3. Strengthens us against evil; 4. Gives us zeal and energy for good; 5. Comforts us in adversity; and, 6. Obtains help for us in time of need, and the grace of perseverance unto death.

The first of the fruits of prayer is union with God. This union with God by prayer should not merely be a transitory one, but it should be lasting. It should, indeed, remain with us, and it is for us to take care that such be the case.

2. Prayer makes us inclined to God. This means that our whole thought and effort should be directed toward heaven, toward the vision of God, toward union with Him. Unfortunately, the greater part of men are worldly minded. Their whole thought and effort is directed toward gain, possession and pleasure. Daily prayer reminds us of our dependence upon God. It teaches us to despise the world with its false appearances and hollow pleasures, and to strive only for that which is true and of lasting value.

3. Prayer strengthens us against evil. The enemy of our salvation is in and about us. For this reason the divine Saviour says, "Watch and pray!"

4. Prayer gives us zeal and energy for good. Man without God's grace is frail and powerless; by reason of original sin he is inclined more to evil than to good. He requires, therefore, strength and energy for good, in order that his disinclination may be overcome. Without prayer the practice of virtue is impossible.

5. Prayer comforts us in adversity. Many and various are the sufferings with which God visits us: sufferings of the soul, as trouble and worry; bodily sufferings, as sickness, poverty. Our divine Lord Himself suffered greatly, and in His bitter passion He taught us how we should pray for the assistance of God. In the Garden of Olives He said, " Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me, yet not my will but thine be done." One of the greatest sorrows we can experience in this life is to lose by death those dear to us. Now what is it that consoles us in such sorrow? Prayer, the thought of God's all-governing providence, which permits nothing to happen which does not serve for our salvation, the thought of reunion in eternity.

6. " Prayer obtains help for us in time of need, and the grace of perseverance unto death." Moses raised his hands to God in prayer, and Israel was victorious. Samuel called upon the Lord, and the Lord gave rain that very day. The Machabees fought and prayed, and they conquered. Peter lay in prison, and the Christian community prayed for him unceasingly; thereupon, the chains fell from his hands, and an angel delivered him from prison.

How must we pray that we may obtain these fruits?

We must pray, 1. With devotion; 2. With humility; 3. With confidence; 4. With resignation to the will of God; and, 5. With perseverance.

When do we pray with devotion?

When our prayer comes from the heart, and we avoid, to our best ability, all distracting thoughts.

Are all distractions during prayer harmful?

They are harmful when we ourselves are the cause of them, if we wilfully admit or entertain them; but when we struggle against them we increase thereby our merit.

What should we do in order that we may be less distracted in our prayers?

Before our prayers we should, as far as possible, banish all worldly thoughts, and present the omnipresent God in a lively manner to our mind.

Holy Scripture says, "Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not as a man that tempteth God" (Ecclus. xviii. 23).

Preparation before prayer consists, 1. In banishing all obstacles, as, for instance, pride and passion; 2. That we recollect ourselves and during the time of prayer try and put out of our mind all worldly thoughts; 3. Represent the omnipresent God in a lively manner to our mind; and, 4. Make our intention for what we are going to pray.

We ought to choose for prayer a quiet place, where we need not fear interruption. We may seek the seclusion of our own room or the tranquillity of the church.

When do we pray with humility?

When we address our prayers to God with a sincere acknowledgment of our weakness and unworthiness.

Jesus teaches us how to pray with humility in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. Another example of humility is given us by the Centurion.

When do we pray with confidence?

When we firmly hope that God will hear our prayer, if it is conducive to His honor and to our salvation. God is omniscient, therefore He knows our sufferings and tribulations. God is all-wise, and, therefore, He knows what is best for us. God is almighty, and for this reason He can help us. He is good and faithful, and will help us.

When do we pray with resignation to the will of God?

When we leave it entirely to Him to hear us, when and how He deems it well.

The leper prayed, "Lord, *if thou wilt,* thou canst make me whole." What we should pray for above all things is divine grace and eternal happiness.

When do we pray with perseverance?

When we do not desist, although apparently not heard, and continue to pray ever more fervently. If God does not grant our prayers at once, He may only wish to test our faith, confidence, and perseverance.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak in to-day's instruction? Of prayer.
2. What is prayer? (Answer as in Catechism.)
3. Why do we call prayer a raising up of the mind to God when God is present everywhere? Because we believe that He is especially enthroned in His glory in heaven.

4. As what else may we designate prayer? As a conversation with God in which we present our petitions to Him with childlike confidence, so as to obtain consolation and assistance from Him.

5. What knowledge does prayer presuppose? The knowledge of our dependence upon God, the knowledge of our poverty, misery, and inability to help ourselves.

6. Of what kind may our prayers be? A prayer of praise, of thanksgiving, or of supplication.

7. What should induce us to praise God? His infinite majesty and glory.

8. What did the angels do at the birth of Christ? They uttered a prayer of praise: "Glory be to God in the highest."

9. What else may our prayer be? It may be a prayer of thanksgiving.

10. Why do we say prayers of thanksgiving? Because God has bestowed great and innumerable blessings upon us.

11. What do we owe God for all His blessings? We owe gratitude to God.

12. Why are we undeserving of God's numerous and great blessings? Because we are sinners.

13. What did even Jesus the Son of God do? He returned thanks.

14. Upon what occasions? 1. At the multiplying of bread in the desert. 2. At the raising of Lazarus from the dead. 3. At the institution of the Last Supper.

15. Are men as grateful to God for His blessings as they ought to be? No; they are not.

16. In what story did Jesus point this out? In the story of the ten lepers.

17. Of the ten who were healed, how many returned to give thanks? One only.

18. Of what other kind may our prayer be? It may be a prayer of petition or supplication.

19. When do we offer up a prayer of this kind? When we ask a blessing of God.

20. What compels us to offer a prayer of petition to God? Our weakness and impotence.

21. Where are we invited to petition God? In Holy Scripture, where it says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you."

22. Why does God wish us to ask Him for His grace? 1. So that we may always be reminded of our dependence upon God. 2. In order that we may make a better use of God's blessings.

23. Is prayer necessary? Prayer is necessary for salvation.

24. To what may we compare prayer? 1. To a ladder by which we ascend to heaven. 2. To a key which opens heaven for us.

25. What comparisons did I make use of? As air is necessary for human life, so is prayer necessary for the soul; as rain and dew are necessary to plants, so is prayer necessary for the soul.

26. Why is prayer necessary? Because God has commanded it, and because without it we do not receive the graces necessary to persevere to the end.

27. What are the principal fruits of prayer? (Answer as in Catechism.)

28. What is the first fruit? It unites us to God.

29. When are we united to God? When our will, our thoughts, and wishes are in accordance with God.

30. How should this union with God be? It should be lasting and enduring.

31. How long will God remain united with man? So long as man commits no sin.

32. What is the second fruit of prayer? It makes us inclined to God.

33. When is a person inclined to God? When his whole thought and endeavor is directed toward heaven and eternal salvation.

34. How are most persons disposed? They are worldly minded.

35. What is the third fruit of prayer? It strengthens against evil and temptation.

36. How many enemies of our salvation have we to fight against? The enemies within us and the enemies without us.

37. What are the enemies within us? Our sensual desires and inclinations.

38. What are the enemies without us? Wicked persons who would lead us to sin.

39. What is the fourth fruit of prayer? Prayer gives us zeal and energy for good.

40. Why is man disinclined for good? In consequence of original sin.

41. To what may we compare the practice of virtue? To the ascent of a high mountain.

42. Is this difficult or easy? It is difficult.

43. What is the fifth fruit of prayer? It comforts us in adversity.

44. What is it that supports us in sufferings? It is prayer.

45. What happens if a man in his sufferings does not turn to God? He may despair.

46. What is often the end of despair? Suicide.

47. What is the sixth fruit of prayer? It obtains for us help in time of need and the grace of perseverance unto death.

48. What consoling promise has Jesus given us so as to encourage our confidence in prayer? Jesus said: "If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you."

49. What further graces do we obtain through prayer? 1. The forgiveness of venial sins. 2. The remission of temporal punishment. 3. The grace of repentance and conversion.

50. Which prayer is of all others the most pleasing to God? The prayer of the just and of children.

51. Why are these prayers most pleasing to God? Because the prayers of children and just persons proceed from a clean heart.

52. How must we pray that we may obtain these fruits? We must pray: 1. With devotion, etc. (As in Catechism.)

53. When do we pray with devotion? When we pray from the heart and avoid, to the best of our ability, all distracting thoughts.

54. When do we pray with humility? When we pray with a lively sense of our weakness and unworthiness.

55. What parable of the Bible history is appropriate here? The parable of the Pharisee and the publican.

56. When do we pray with confidence? When we confidently hope that God will hear our feeble prayer, provided it will be well for us.

57. When do we pray with resignation to the will of God? When we leave it entirely to Him to hear us when and how He thinks well.

58. When is our prayer persevering? When we do not desist, although we are apparently not heard, and continue to pray the more fervently.

59. Why may God sometimes let us ask a long time? Because He may wish to test our faith and confidence.

XXVI.—Prayer (Continued).

We will to-day continue our explanation of prayer, and will ask the question: Must we in order to pray use a set form of words?

No; while this is done in vocal prayer, there is also an interior or mental prayer, called meditation.

For instance, the Our Father is a vocal prayer, whether we say it aloud or without moving the lips. The acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition, the Angelus, the various litanies, rosary, Way of the Cross, are vocal prayers. At public devotions in the church vocal prayers are said aloud. When alone, vocal prayers afford us the advantage of praying more easily. Of course, if in vocal prayer our lips alone are moving without our heart being raised up to God, then it is not prayer, but a senseless babbling and waste of time.

In what does meditation consist?

It consists in reflecting on supernatural things: the life and sufferings of Jesus, the divine perfections, and other truths of our religion, in order to excite in our hearts pious sentiments, but especially good and efficacious resolutions.

I will explain this to you by an illustration. You desire, for instance, to meditate upon the bitter Passion of Our Lord and Saviour, and to do that you consider the following points:

1. How did Jesus suffer? Then go briefly, in your mind, through the bitter Passion of our Lord.

2. For whom did Jesus suffer? Think for whom He did it. For all mankind, for friends and foes, for just and sinners, for the worthy and unworthy.

3. Why did Jesus suffer? Voluntarily, innocently, for love of mankind, with perfect resignation to the will of His heavenly Father.

Or, if a person wishes to take the life of Christ as an object of meditation, he may contemplate how Jesus lived in His youth under His parents' observation; how He lived as boy, as man; how Jesus acted toward sinners, toward His enemies; how He patiently went through His Passion; how He suffered an ignominious death.

After contemplating our subject we close our meditation by applying to us the truths considered and making a good resolution. From the meditation upon the Passion or the life of Our Lord, for instance, we learn patience in suffering, meekness, charity; we also learn to

appreciate more and more the great love of God as manifested in the redemption, and this will move us to be concerned about our salvation, and will incite and strengthen us in our combat against evil.

Application and resolution, of course, form indispensable parts of meditation and render it most profitable.

We may select any truth of faith as a subject for meditation. A great help for meditation is the reading of good books, for instance, the "Imitation of Christ." Sermons will also furnish much food for meditations. Meditations are not only profitable, but even necessary, for if we do not ponder diligently over the truths of our religion, they will not make a deep impression upon us.

Many persons regard meditation as something too difficult, and for that reason neglect it, or they imagine that meditation is a matter fit only for priests and religious. This is false. A heart striving for perfection is of more assistance to meditation than knowledge.

When ought we to pray?

Christ says that "we ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke xviii. 1).

To pray always means to pray continually, without ceasing. This must not be misunderstood. We must not, for instance, neglect our work for prayer. Nor is it meant that we should not eat or sleep. It means that we should like to pray, and that by offering up all our actions to God, we form them into prayers.

We pray always when we frequently raise up our minds and hearts to God, and offer up to Him all our labors, sufferings, and pleasures. At work, while solicitous for temporal affairs, we should not forget Him who alone can bring things to a successful issue. All our efforts are fruitless and vain if God does not help us. For this reason we should begin all our work with God, continue and complete it in Him, and ask His blessing. Then our work, if we do it patiently, looking up to God, will become a prayer and an oblation well pleasing to God. The striking of the clock should be an incentive to us to think of eternity, for every hour brings death nearer. The thought, too, of the divine omnipresence and omniscience is a continual prayer, for this thought restrains us from doing wrong.

When ought we to pray especially?

1. In time of temptation and other urgent need. 2. In the morning and at night, before and after meals, when the Angelus bell rings, and when in church.

We must, then, pray especially in time of temptation.

There are two kinds of temptations: interior—evil desires and inclinations; and exterior—bad persons who lead us into evil by word or example.

When the tempter approaches us, we must implore the help of God against our worst enemy—sin. Men are weak creatures, and as a result of original sin, more inclined to evil than to good; without divine grace, therefore, we are incapable of resisting temptations to evil. Our divine Saviour, in spite of His omnipotence, permitted the evil spirit to tempt Him thrice, so as to give us an example how to resist temptation. An effective and brief mental prayer in temptation is, "Praised be Jesus Christ!" We should pray also in time of private or common misfortune. Private misfortune, like illness, adversity, etc., common misfortune, like epidemics, war, famine, drought, accidents on land or water involving loss of life and injuries.

For such reason the bishop sometimes directs universal prayer, so that Christians may unite their prayer in beseeching God to avert calamity.

We should pray in danger. Our lives are menaced by many perils. We should commend ourselves to God's care in danger, and there are numberless examples how God has saved persons who had recourse to Him in great danger.

We should, above all, pray every morning and night, for the beginning and the end of the day are particularly important. Our first thought on awaking should be of God, and for this purpose there should be a crucifix hanging over or near our bed. At our morning prayers we should thank God for the protection He has afforded us during the night, and for the grace to spend the day in a manner pleasing to God. At night thank God again for this protection, examine your consciences, make a good resolution, pray for those you are obliged to pray for, like parents and other near relations, and close with commending to God your well being for the night. We should pray, too, before and after meals. Before the meal we should ask God to bless our food, and after the meal we should return thanks to God for what He has given us.

The Angelus bell is rung three times daily to remind us to say the Angelus as an act of thanksgiving for the incarnation of the Son of God.

We ought to pray, of course, when we are in church. The church is God's house. We assemble there for common prayer and for divine worship, in accordance with the promise of Jesus, "Where

two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst." In church, furthermore, it is easiest for us to pray. There is nothing to distract us, while everything there turns our minds to divine things.

School children should pray before their lessons begin, in order that God may enlighten their understanding and strengthen their wills to do good and shun evil. After school the children pray again and thank God for the instruction received. Before starting on a journey we recommend ourselves to the protection of God, and when we return safely we thank God for His paternal care.

When, in the Sacrament of Penance, we receive the remission of our sins, and in the Holy Eucharist receive the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ, we must thank God in prayer for this great and priceless grace.

We should also frequently pray for a happy death, for that is one of the greatest blessings that God can grant us.

A particular form of prayer and devotion is found in pilgrimages. Pilgrimages are good and commendable when undertaken in the spirit of the Church, with sentiments of devotion, penance, and mortification and in a God-fearing spirit. We see, for instance, pious pilgrims journey to places distinguished by sacred events or special manifestations of God's grace—for instance, to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Rome, Lourdes, in our parts, to Auriesville, St. Anne de Beaupré, etc.

For whom should we pray?

We should pray for ourselves and those near and dear to us, also for all the living and the dead, including friends and enemies, benefactors, superiors, for heretics and infidels.

Application.—Consider how fortunate you, a poor mortal, are in being allowed to speak to God, the Most High, as a child speaks to his father. Pray, therefore, often and gladly, always with the greatest devotion, at home and in church.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Must we use a set form of words in all our prayers? No; this is done in vocal prayer only; there is also an interior or mental prayer called meditation.

2. Mention some vocal prayers. The Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition, the Rosary, Litanies.

3. What advantage has vocal prayer? We pray more easily when using certain forms of prayers, bringing to our mind the holy truths and our needs.

4. When is vocal prayer valueless? When said with our lips only, without lifting our minds and hearts up to God.

5. In what does meditation consist? (As in lesson.)

6. When ought we to pray? Christ says: "That we ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke xviii. 1).

7. When do we pray always? We pray always when we frequently lift up our heart and thoughts to God, and offer to Him all our actions.

8. What should alternate with prayer? Work.

9. Why should work alternate with prayer? Because the success of our work comes from God.

10. What will our work be if God does not bless it? It is vain, without result.

11. When should we pray especially? 1. In time of temptation, etc. (As in lesson.)

12. With what should we begin and close the day? With prayer.

13. Who has given us the beautiful example of how to overcome temptation? Our divine Saviour Jesus Christ, who allowed Himself to be tempted three times.

14. What does the Church often do to avert common calamity? She ordains universal prayer.

15. At what other time should we pray? Before and after meals: 1. To ask God's blessing upon what we are about to partake of, and 2. To return thanks for the blessings received.

16. Why should we particularly pray in church? Because the church is especially the house of God and of prayer, and in church it is easiest and most profitable for us to pray.

17. What has Jesus said of common worship? "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst."

18. Why is the church most particularly God's house? Because God is especially present in the church, in the Holy Eucharist.

19. Everything that we see or take notice of in church raises our thoughts to spiritual things. Mention some of these objects. The altar, the tabernacle, statues, etc.

20. When are pilgrimages good and commendable? When they are undertaken according to the spirit of the Church, in a spirit of devotion, penance, and mortification.

21. For whom must we pray? We must pray for all men: for the living and the dead, for friends and enemies; especially for our parents, brothers, and sisters, benefactors, spiritual and temporal superiors, and also for heretics and infidels.

22. Suppose we prayed only for ourselves? That would be selfish.

23. What should we ask for heretics and infidels? The grace of conversion to the true faith.

24. How should we pray to God? As a child speaking to his father.

25. How does a child ask something of his parent? He asks with firm confidence that he will be heard.

In conclusion, dear children, think often of the example of Jesus, who, although He was God, spent much time in praying to His heavenly Father.

XXVII.—The Lord's Prayer.

Having concluded in our last instruction the doctrine on prayer, let us to-day consider the beautiful prayer which Our Lord Himself has taught us, namely, the Our Father, called also the Lord's Prayer.

Of the many different prayers the most excellent, the most sublime, the best is the Our Father, the Lord's Prayer.

The prayer is called the most excellent, 1. On account of its origin; 2. Because of its form.

1. On account of its origin, for it comes from our divine Saviour Jesus Christ Himself. It is recorded that the apostles and disciples begged Jesus to teach them how to pray, and He said: "When you pray, then pray thus: 'Our Father, who art in heaven,'" etc.

2. The Our Father is the most excellent prayer on account of its form, for it contains in a few brief words the most important and profound truths. It is a prayer suitable for every necessity and circumstance of life, and is intelligible to every one.

For this reason it is particularly effective. It is the universal prayer of the entire Christian Church in all parts of the globe, and it is regarded as a Sacramental.

What does the Lord's Prayer contain?

It contains a short preface and seven petitions.

What do you call its preface?

These words, "Our Father, who art in heaven."

After the preface follow seven petitions.

If we take a glance in general at the contents of the Our Father we shall find there reference to God's glory, His kingdom, His will, solicitude for the necessary temporal goods, deliverance from temptations and sin, from temporal and eternal evil.

Our task upon earth is: To know God and to love Him. The first petition refers to this: "Hallowed be Thy name."

Furthermore, it is our task to glorify God, and to strive after God's kingdom in heaven as well as for the spreading of God's kingdom upon earth. The second petition is, therefore: "Thy kingdom come." The fulfilling of His holy will leads us to heaven, the kingdom of God. For this reason we pray in the third petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." For our support upon earth we stand in need of temporal things, such as food, clothing, etc. Hence we pray for these in the fourth petition: "Give us this

day our daily bread." Many persons repay God's paternal goodness with ingratitude and sin. Now, as sin closes heaven against us, we pray, then, in the fifth petition, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." We desire God to guard us, not only from sin itself, but also from the occasion of sin; therefore we pray, in the sixth petition, "Lead us not into temptation." Finally, in the seventh petition, we pray to be delivered from all evil of soul and body.

What does the word Father remind us of?

That God is our Father, and that we, therefore, ought to pray to Him with childlike reverence, love, and confidence.

We are told to pray to God and call Him Father, to express our childlike reverence. Although God is our loving Father, still He is also the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth, and this fills us with holy reverence. This reverence should not be servile, but childlike. We should pray to God with love, for as the father is filled with infinite love for the child, so also the child should be filled with love for his father. The father's love for his child should inspire the latter with confidence that God will hear the prayer if it be for the child's welfare. God requires this love from us. He desires to be called Father.

Why do we say Our Father, and not My Father?

Because God, being the Father of all men, we all are His children, and should, therefore, love one another as brothers, and pray for one another.

All men, rich and poor, high and low, prince and pauper, are before God alike, brothers and sisters, children of one Father. For this reason we do not pray in a selfish manner for ourselves alone, but we pray for all of us. St. Augustine says: "We should gather from these words that our neighbor's welfare should concern us as much as our own." Thus the first two words of the Our Father preach to us the great commandment of the love of God and of our neighbor.

Why do we add the words, "Who art in heaven"?

To call to our mind, 1. That God, though He is everywhere, dwells especially in heaven, where we hope one day to see Him face to face. 2. That we are but pilgrims upon earth, and that our true country is in heaven; and, 3. That when we pray, we must detach our hearts from all earthly things, and raise them up to heaven.

What do we ask for in the first petition?

That the name of God may not be profaned or blasphemed, but that God may be rightly known, loved, and honored by us and by all men. The name of God, God Himself, His omnipotence, justice, and goodness should be made known and glorified. To this end God created the visible world, so that in created things we might perceive His glory and magnitude, and praise His holy name.

But not only by us shall the name of God be hallowed, but also by others.

The first petition includes our desire, 1. That others also may not profane the name of God; 2. That they, too, may attain to a knowledge of the true God; and, 3. Glorify God evermore in word and deed.

What do we ask for in the second petition?

"Thy kingdom come!"

1. That the kingdom of God, the Church, may be more and more extended upon earth; 2. That the kingdom of divine grace and love may be established in our hearts, so that, 3. After this life we may all be admitted into the kingdom of heaven.

The Saviour Himself calls the Church upon earth His kingdom; sometimes He speaks of the kingdom of God in us. We pray also that the kingdom of truth, God's kingdom outside us; the kingdom of grace and justice, the kingdom of God within us, and the kingdom of salvation, the realm of God above us, may all come. The kingdom of God upon earth, the Church, is extended principally by missionary work. For this reason we should, 1. Support the Church to the best of our ability; 2. Thank God frequently and with our whole hearts, that He has, without any merit on our part, admitted us into this kingdom; 3. Ask God for the grace to persevere in this kingdom; 4. Promise God to found the kingdom of virtue and justice in ourselves and to strengthen it evermore. God Himself desires to dwell in us and reign in us, therefore, we should, above all things, seek the kingdom of God and His justice. There is yet another kingdom, the kingdom of sin, of vice, and the evil spirit. This kingdom must be exterminated, destroyed, annihilated. We pray further that God may lead us after this life into the kingdom of everlasting bliss. This kingdom, however, according to Jesus' own words, suffers violence, i. e., it costs trouble and effort to attain it.

But not only in life, but at death as well, we should pray, "Thy kingdom come," i. e., "Admit us into Thy heavenly kingdom."

The third petition says, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

What do we ask for in the third petition?

We ask that we and all men may do the will of God on earth as faithfully and cheerfully as the angels and saints do it in heaven.

If we wish to attain eternal happiness in the kingdom of God, a condition and a means thereto is the fulfilling of God's will. Jesus said, "Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that do the will of my heavenly Father." God revealed to us in the Old Law His holy will in the Ten Commandments, and Jesus, in the New Law, has reaffirmed the Ten Commandments. For this reason Jesus said, "I am not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to bring them to perfection." The divine will should be done as promptly, faithfully, and cheerfully as the angels and saints do it in heaven. This we are unable to do without God's grace, the more so as our wills, in consequence of original sin, are inclined more to evil than to good. We should, then, not only make a resolution to do God's will, but we should also pray to God for the grace thereto. This petition reminds us also of the sufferings that God sends us in His wisdom. In such sufferings we must pray with Jesus in the Garden of Olives, "Father, not my will, but Thine be done."

We shall continue this subject in our next lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? On the Our Father, the Lord's Prayer.

2. What does the Catechism call the Our Father? It calls the Our Father the most excellent of all prayers.

3. Why is the Our Father called the most excellent of all prayers? Because it is the most beautiful, most sublime, and most efficient.

4. Why is it called the Our Father? Because it begins with those words.

5. What else is it called? It is also called the Lord's Prayer.

6. Why so? Because Jesus taught it to us and exhorted us to say it.

7. What can you tell me about this? The apostles and disciples of Jesus once begged Jesus to teach them how to pray. Jesus said: When you pray, pray thus: Our Father, etc.

8. In what respect is the Our Father the most excellent of prayers? 1. On account of its origin. 2. Its contents, and 3. Its effectiveness.

9. What do you know of its origin? from whom does it come? It comes from Jesus Christ, the Son of God Himself.

10. What do you know of its contents? It contains in brief words the most important and most profound truths; it is a prayer suitable for every condition of life, and is intelligible to every Christian.

11. What has the Our Father become for this reason? The universal prayer of the entire Christian Church.

12. How do we regard the Our Father? As a sacramental.

13. What do we owe our divine Saviour for this beautiful prayer? We owe Him the greatest gratitude.

14. What does the Lord's Prayer contain? It contains a short preface and seven petitions.

15. What do you call its preface? These words: "Our Father who art in heaven."

16. What did Jesus teach us to call God? Jesus taught us to call God Our Father.

17. What does the word father unite in itself? All the love and confidence of a child for his father.

18. What follows after the preface? Seven petitions.

19. If we cast a glance at the contents of the Our Father in general, what do we find referred to? God's glory, His kingdom, His will, care for the necessary temporal affairs, deliverance from sin, temptations, and from all evil.

20. Which petition of the Our Father has reference to the glory of God? The first: "Hallowed be Thy name."

21. Which petition refers to the kingdom of God? The second petition: "Thy kingdom come!"

22. Which petition refers to God's will? The third petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

23. Which petition has reference to our corporal and temporal necessities? The fourth: "Give us this day our daily bread."

24. Which petition refers to the forgiveness of our sins? The fifth: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

25. Which petition refers to the occasions and temptations to evil? The sixth: "Lead us not into temptation."

26. Which petition has reference to the deliverance from all evil? The seventh: "But deliver us from evil."

27. We will now proceed to explain the Our Father. Of what does the word Father remind us? That God is our Father, and that we should pray to Him, therefore, with reverence, love, and confidence.

28. If we call God Father, what, then, are we? We are His children.

29. How ought we, as children, to pray to Our Father? With childlike reverence, love, and confidence.

30. Why must we pray to God with reverence? Because He is not only Our Father, but at the same time the supreme Lord of heaven and earth.

31. With what other sentiments should we pray to God? With sentiments of love.

32. For what reason? Because God loves us with an infinite love.

33. With what does the love of God inspire us? Confidence and trust that God will hear us if it is best for us.

34. Why do we say Our Father and not my Father? Because God is the Father of all men, and we, therefore, as brothers and sisters, should pray for one another.

35. If we are all brothers and sisters, what are we before God? We are all alike before God.

36. What says St. Augustine of the little word "our"? We should gather from this word that our neighbor's welfare should be as dear to us as our own.

37. What do the first two words of the Our Father preach to us, therefore? They preach to us the great commandment of the love of God and of our neighbor.

38. Why do we add these words: "Who art in heaven"? To call to our mind, etc. (As in lesson.)

39. What further should we do? We should detach our heart from earthly things.

40. What is meant thereby? Everything that is upon earth, especially temporal goods.

41. What does Jesus say of those whose hearts are drawn to temporal goods? Jesus says: It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!

42. What do we ask for in the first petition, "Hallowed be Thy name"? That the name of God may never be profaned or blasphemed, but that God may be rightly known, loved, and honored by us and by all men.

43. For how many things do we pray in the first petition? For three things, namely: 1. That God may grant us His grace to know ever better His infinite glory and majesty.

44. Which is the second and third? 2. That we may give and show God in all things the reverence due Him, and praise and glorify God in word and in deed. 3. That we should never profane or misuse the same by irreverent speech or blasphemy.

45. By whom shall the name of God be hallowed? By ourselves and by all the rest of men.

46. How can we contribute to the name of God being hallowed by others? By our good example, by preventing evil when possible.

47. What is the second petition? It is: "Thy kingdom come."

48. Of what is it here the question? Of the kingdom of God.

49. Of how many kinds is the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God is of three kinds: 1. The kingdom of God outside us or about us, the Catholic Church. 2. The kingdom of God in us, the kingdom of love and grace. 3. The kingdom of God over us, heaven, eternal bliss.

50. What do we ask for in the second petition? (Answer as in Catechism.)

51. How is God's kingdom upon earth, the Church, principally extended? By the missionaries.

52. How must we in a material way further the kingdom of God on earth? By contributing to her support.

53. What do we owe God for having admitted us without any merit of our own into His kingdom upon earth? We should thank God frequently from our hearts.

54. What should we beg of God? That He might grant us the grace to persevere in this kingdom.

55. Is there another kingdom besides the kingdom of God? Yes; the kingdom of sin, of vice, and the evil spirit.

56. What must be done with this kingdom? It must be crushed, destroyed, and annihilated.

57. What else do we pray for in the words: "Thy kingdom come"? We pray God that after this life He may conduct us into the kingdom of eternal bliss.

58. What says Holy Scripture about this kingdom? "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only those that use violence will carry it off."

59. When should we pray particularly "Thy kingdom come"? At the hour of our death.

60. What is the third petition? "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

61. What do we ask for in the third petition? (Answer as in Catechism.)

62. Of what is there mention in this petition? Of the will of God.

63. What has God done in order that His holy will may be done? He has revealed His holy will to us.

64. Through whom did God reveal His will in the Old Law? Through Moses and the prophets.

65. Through whom did God reveal His holy will to us in the New Law? Through His divine Son, Jesus Christ.

66. Why did God reveal His holy will? That men might fulfil the same.

67. How should men do the holy will of God? As the angels in heaven do it.

68. How is that? Promptly, faithfully, cheerfully.

69. Is it necessary that we do the will of God? Yes; it is necessary.

70. What does Jesus say concerning this? "Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my heavenly Father."

71. What is requisite in order that we may do the will of God? We require the grace of God therefor.

72. Why can we do God's will only in His grace? Because our will, in consequence of original sin, is inclined more to evil than to good.

73. What more, therefore, do we ask for in the third petition? We ask also for God's grace, that we may do His holy will.

XXVIII.—The Lord's Prayer (Continued).

We come, in the explanation of the Our Father, to the fourth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread."

We ask in this petition that God give us all that is daily necessary for our soul and body. As man consists of body and soul, so has he also two kinds of necessities: corporal and spiritual. For this reason Jesus teaches us to ask for the necessities of the body and of the soul, with the words, "Give us this day our daily bread." This petition, however, is not to be taken literally, as if we were merely to ask for bread or for our bodily nourishment, but by the word *bread* is understood everything that belongs to our corporal wants and welfare, for man can, as a rule, do good only while he is in strength and good health. There are people who have everything in abundance, and they may think they have nothing to ask for. But they are subject to adversity and illness as well as the poor man.

The word *give* in this petition does not mean that we expect God to look to our needs without our cooperation.

We only ask in humility that God may bless our labor with good results. You know there are poor people who, no matter how hard they work, do not seem able to get along. God in His wisdom knows what is best for us; still we may pray to be blessed with success.

We say, Give *us,* praying not only for ourselves, but also for others. We ask for bread, not for costly food, but only for that which is most necessary. We add to our petition the word *to-day,* so as to remind us that our heart ought not to be occupied with solicitude for the morrow, but that we ask God for that which we need to-day. The words of Holy Scripture remind us of this, "Let us not be solicitous for the next day, for each day has its own cares."

Besides the bread, or the nourishment of our body, there is a bread for our soul, manna, the bread of heaven, the most Holy Eucharist. We also should desire this bread, and we ask God for this, too. The Word of God also is nourishment for our soul, for Jesus says, "Man lives not only from bread, but from every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." "I am the Bread of Life, they who come to me will not hunger for evermore." Let us, then, pray confidently and devoutly for that which we require daily for body and soul, and let us cheerfully divide that which we have with the poor.

We now come to the fifth petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

This petition consists of two parts: a supplication and a promise. The supplication says, "Forgive us our trespasses!" The promise says, "As we forgive them that trespass against us."

The faults which we have committed should fill us with sorrow and contrition. In contrition we should ask forgiveness. Furthermore, we pray not only for the forgiveness of our own sins, but also for the forgiveness of our neighbor's sins. To obtain forgiveness of our sins, and to remove the enmity between us and God, the chief condition is that we should promise God earnestly and sincerely that we forgive those who have offended us. He, therefore, who has not the intention and the sincere will to forgive his enemy from his heart, lies in his prayer. This petition should banish all hatred, all ill will, all animosity from our hearts, that we may deserve God's grace, goodness, and mercy.

What do we ask for in the sixth petition?

"Lead us not into temptation."

We ask that God remove from us all temptations, all dangers of sin, or, at least, give us sufficient grace to resist them.

We have learned what temptations are. Every temptation causes a struggle, and every struggle tires us. Therefore, we must be on our guard, in order that temptation may not overcome us. Jesus exhorts us to this with the words, "Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." If we ask God to avert temptation from us, we must, of course, not wilfully seek out the occasions of sin, be they persons or places, remembering the words, "He who seeks the danger shall perish in it." If we have God to help us we can not fail to gain the victory; hence, we must beg God's assistance.

Why does God permit us to be tempted?

1. To keep us humble; 2. To increase our zeal for virtue and our merits.

Everything that God sends us tends to our good, and His paternal love does not permit anything to happen to His children which is not best for them. Thus temptation teaches us to know our weaknesses, leads us to self-knowledge, and to confidence in God. Without temptation there would be no combat; without combat no victory. Holy Scripture says, "God will not tempt you above your strength." Every temptation which man overcomes increases his merits.

Precaution requires watchfulness in temptation. To watchfulness we must add prayer, that God may give us strength to overcome temptation. The best way to combat temptations by inclination is to practise the opposite virtues. The temptation to unbelief should be met by an act of faith; the temptation to intemperance by fasting, etc.

What do we ask for in the seventh petition, "Deliver us from evil"?

We pray that God preserve us from all evil of soul and body, especially from sin and eternal damnation.

From evil means from that which separates us from God. Everything is good that corresponds to God's holy will and leads us to God. We call also the sufferings of this time evils, because they are the consequences of sin. We ask, then, in the seventh petition that God will preserve us from the real evil—sin—and its disastrous consequences, eternal damnation, and temporal evils, as sickness, war, poverty, famine, etc. We should not, however, put this request unconditionally, but only on condition that if it is best for us, which God in His wisdom alone knows. At the end of the seven petitions we join the word "Amen." This means "So be it!" This little word expresses our confidence and our ardent desire to be heard. We may be confident of being heard because God by virtue of His omnipotence can give us every good, by virtue of His goodness will give us every good, and by virtue of His faithfulness intends to give us every good.

The desire of being heard lies in prayer itself, for if we did not desire we would not pray.

The application of this instruction is that we should say the Lord's Prayer with reverential attention, remembering that we have received it from our divine Redeemer Himself. We may not only recite the entire Our Father, but repeat its particular petitions on suitable occasions, for instance, "Thy will be done!" "Hallowed be thy name," etc.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the last four petitions of the Our Father.

2. What is the fourth petition? Give us this day our daily bread.

3. What do we ask for in the fourth petition? We ask that God would give us all that is daily necessary for our soul and body.

4. Is this petition to be taken in a literal sense as if God should only give us bread? No; it is not so to be taken.

5. For what do we pray then in the fourth petition? For everything necessary for soul and body.

6. What do we need for our soul? We need forgiveness of our sins, and God's grace to practise good.

7. What are our necessities for the body? We need food, clothing, dwelling, health.

8. Which necessities stand higher, those of the soul or those of the body? The necessities of the soul.

9. Can you prove this from Holy Scripture? From the words, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?"

10. There are persons who have all things in abundance; must they also pray for their daily bread? Yes; they too must pray, because they are subject to adversity and sickness as well as others, and they have their necessities for soul and body.

11. If God is to give us our daily bread, what must we do on our part? We must cooperate.

12. How is this to be done? By diligent work.

13. What will God give to our work? Blessing and success.

14. For whom do we ask daily bread? For ourselves and all mankind.

15. What should we be if we only asked for ourselves? We should be selfish.

16. Why did Jesus tell us only to ask for our daily bread? To teach us that we should ask for the necessary, not for riches and abundance.

17. Why do we add the words "this day" to the fourth petition? To remind ourselves that we must not be too solicitous for the next day.

18. What other bread is there besides the earthly bread? 1. The bread of our souls, the Holy Eucharist. 2. The word of God.

19. Which verse of Scripture can you quote concerning the spiritual bread? Jesus said: "I am the Bread of Life, whosoever cometh to me, the same shall not hunger for evermore."

20. What proof can you give me from Holy Writ that the word of God also is food for the soul? "Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

21. What ought we to do if God has blessed us with riches and abundance? We should remember the poor and needy and give alms.

22. What says the fifth petition of the Our Father? Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

23. What does this petition comprise? It comprises: 1. A supplication. 2. A promise.

24. When we ask God to forgive us our trespasses, what do we mean? Our offenses.

25. With what should our past faults imbue us? With shame, repentance, and contrition.

26. What should we ask of God for this reason? For the forgiveness of our sins, and the removing of the enmity between God and mankind.

27. What do we add, therefore, to the petition for forgiveness of our sins? The promise that we too will pardon those who offend us.

28. What will happen to those that would not forgive their enemies? God will not forgive them either.

29. What ought this petition to banish from our hearts? All hatred, ill-will, all animosity toward our enemies.

30. What do we strive to imitate thereby? The goodness and mercy of God.

31. What is the sixth petition of the Our Father? Lead us not into temptation.

32. What do we ask for in the sixth petition? (Answer as in Catechism.)

33. What are mentioned in this petition? Temptations to evil.

34. What are temptations? They are inducements to commit sin.

35. What must we do so as not to yield to temptation? We must struggle with it.

36. How does Jesus admonish us so that we may not fall into temptation? Jesus says: "Watch and pray!"

37. What ought we to do to diminish exterior temptation? We should avoid those places and persons where and through whom we might be led into sin.

38. What would it be on our part if we voluntarily sought the places and occasions of sin, and yet prayed, "Lead us not into temptation"? It would be presumption.

39. What is said of those who needlessly place themselves in danger? "Those who seek the danger shall perish in it."

40. How should we be fortified in temptations? By vigilance, prayer, and divine assistance.

41. Why does God permit us to be tempted? 1. To keep us humble, etc. (As in Catechism.)

42. To what does everything tend which God sends us? It tends to our good.

43. What does God's paternal love and goodness never permit? That anything should happen to His children which is not best for them.

44. What do temptations teach us to know? Our weakness.

45. To what, then, do temptations lead us? They lead us to self-knowledge.

46. What says Holy Scripture of our temptations? It says: "God will not permit you to be tempted above your strength."

47. What means should we employ to overcome temptations? We should watch and pray.

48. What should be added to precaution and circumspection? Prayer.

49. Are children tempted to evil? Yes; even children are tempted to evil.

50. Ought you to listen to the suggestions of the tempter? No; I ought not.

51. At what time of life should we begin to learn to overcome temptation? In early youth.

52. Which is the best means to overcome a temptation quickly? The Christian salutation: "Praised be Jesus Christ."

53. What is the seventh petition? "Deliver us from evil."

54. What means to deliver? Deliver means to set free.

55. From what should God deliver us? From all evil and wickedness.

56. What is really only evil? Evil is really only that which separates us from God, namely, sin.

57. What else is called evil by mankind? Sickness, poverty, war, famine, deformity, etc.

58. What, however, are these evils? A punishment for sin or trials sent to us by God.

59. What are all earthly evils? They are the consequences of original sin.

60. Can evil be entirely banished from the world? No; it can not be banished.

61. For what should we pray with regard to this evil? For patience to bear the sufferings of this world with resignation, if God wills that they should visit us.

62. What did Jesus pray in His agony in the garden? He said: "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass away from me; yet not my will, but thine be done."

63. What says Holy Writ of those who are visited with sufferings? "Whom God loveth, He chasteneth."

64. Which man in the Old Testament had to suffer greatly? Job.

65. When God had taken away all that was dear to him, what did he exclaim? "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

66. With what word do we conclude the Our Father? With the word Amen, meaning, so be it.

67. What does this little word express? Confidence of being heard.

68. Why ought we to have this confidence? Because God can and will give us all good.

69. Which is the first prayer that children learn? The Our Father.

70. How ought it to be said? Attentively and devoutly.

71. If we say the Our Father attentively, what can we do at the same time? We can reflect upon each petition.

XXIX.—The Angelic Salutation.

After explaining to you in our last lesson the Our Father, it is proper that we now take up the prayer which is usually added to the Our Father, namely, the Hail Mary, also called the Angelic Salutation. It is a prayer said in honor of the Mother of God, and its full text is, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

This prayer is called the Angelic Salutation because it begins with the words which the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary at the annunciation. It is called also the *Ave Maria*, from its Latin version, or Hail Mary, its beginning in our language.

When explaining the second commandment we spoke of the veneration of Mary and of the saints, and you know that we do not adore the saints, but pray to them for their intercession with God. The Angelic Salutation is almost as old as Christianity, for from the earliest Christian times the words of the angel and of St. Elizabeth, which it contains, have been used in praying to the Blessed Virgin. If the Our Father is the most excellent, sublime, and most beautiful of prayers because taught to us by our divine Saviour Himself, then after it the Angelic Salutation is most worthy of our particular regard. For in it we use the words with which the angel delivered his message from God and the words which, by divine inspiration, Elizabeth spoke to the Blessed Virgin: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!" The form of this prayer is as sublime as its origin. Of its effectiveness St. Bonaventure says, "As often as you greet Mary she greets you in return," i. e., she is ready to give us consolation and blessings, which she obtains and asks for us of her divine Son.

Why do we add the Hail Mary to the Our Father?

That the Most Blessed Mother of God may second our weak prayer by her powerful intercession with her divine Son. When we beseech God Almighty, we feel that we are unworthy of His graces and blessings; besides, our prayer is often imperfect and wanting. For this reason we pray to the Blessed Mother of God, that she, whose prayers certainly are most potent, may support our sup-

plication by her intercession. We confess, also, in adding the Hail Mary to the Our Father that the veneration of Mary is rightfully joined to the glorification of her divine Son, and profess our Catholic faith before those who deny to the Blessed Virgin and Mother of God the due honor of which she once prophetically spoke, "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

How many parts has the Hail Mary?

Two parts—a prayer of praise and a prayer of supplication.

Of what is the prayer of praise composed?

1. Of the words of the angel, "Hail (Mary) full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women"; and, 2. Of the words of St. Elizabeth, "And blessed is the fruit of thy womb," to which we add the name of Jesus.

The second part of the Hail Mary consists of a prayer of supplication, added by the Church, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

When did the angel Gabriel speak those words?

When he announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she would become the Mother of God (Luke i. 28). The word "hail" is an expression of respect and of greeting on account of the exalted dignity which Mary was to participate in. It is a heavenly salutation, brought, at the command of God, to the poor and humble Virgin at Nazareth by the angel Gabriel.

What is the meaning of the word Mary?

The name Mary signifies Star of the Sea.

She is indeed a star of the sea, which shines before us as a model upon the stormy sea of this world, in dangers and temptations, in doubt, anxiety, and need.

St. Bonaventure says, "The name Mary is so potent and glorious that heaven exults, the earth triumphs, and the angels rejoice when it is uttered."

Why do we address Mary by the words, "Full of grace"?

1. Because Mary was filled with grace even before her birth; 2. Because she always increased in grace; and, 3. Because she brought forth the Author and origin of all graces.

Mary is full of grace because the Lord has poured out upon her the entire fulness of His grace.

"In truth," exclaims St. Augustine, "to whom should the Lord grant more graces than to her who was deemed worthy to conceive and to give birth to the Author of grace?"

St. Thomas Aquinas says, "The Blessed Virgin received such a fulness of grace that she stands next to the Author of grace."

This fulness of grace was received by Mary not only at her birth, but even *before* her birth. For this reason the Catholic Church declared as an Article of Faith the dogma that Mary was conceived and born without sin, that she was not burdened with original sin, as is the fate of other human beings. This article of faith is commemorated in the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Hence, the Catholic Church calls Mary the Mother of divine grace, a spiritual vessel.

2. The grace with which Mary was gifted increased without ceasing. As a growing tree spreads forth its boughs and branches, so did Mary always grow in grace.

3. Mary is called full of grace also because she gave birth to the Author and Dispenser of all graces.

Hence, the Catholic Church calls her, in the Litany of Loretto, "Cause of our joy."

"Mary is not only filled of grace for herself, but for all mankind," says St. Thomas Aquinas.

Why do we say, "The Lord is with thee"?

Because God is, in a most particular manner, with the Blessed Virgin, wherefore she is justly called the Chosen Daughter of the Heavenly Father, the true Mother of the divine Son, and the Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Ghost. By grace the soul is united to God, and as Mary was full of grace, so also was God through His grace united with her, indeed, in a most particular manner. God is with all the just; however, as Mary was just in the highest degree, also God was with her in a special manner.

St. Bernard says, "The Lord is with thee, as a father with his daughter, whom he carefully protects; as a bridegroom with his spouse, whom he dearly loves; as a king with his consort, whom he holds in high esteem."

We shall conclude our subject in our next lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the angelic salutation.

2. Why is this prayer called the angelic salutation? Because it begins with the same words with which the angel saluted Mary when he brought to her the message that she was to be the mother of God.

3. To what prayer do we usually add the angelic salutation? To the Our Father.

4. What is the angelic salutation still further called? It is called also the *Ave Maria* or Hail Mary.

5. When did we speak of the veneration due to Mary? In a former instruction on veneration and invocation of the saints.

6. Whom should we specially venerate and invoke above all the angels and saints? The Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God.

7. Does the Hail Mary come to us from ancient or recent times? It comes from the earliest period of Christianity.

8. Whence do you know this? Because already in the earliest ages of Christianity the words of the angel and of St. Elizabeth were used in praying to the Blessed Virgin.

9. Which prayer, therefore, after the Our Father, deserves our special regard? The Hail Mary.

10. What origin has the Hail Mary? It has a heavenly origin.

11. How can you prove this to me? The words of the angel Gabriel were spoken at God's command, and St. Elizabeth spoke her words by divine inspiration.

12. What does St. Bonaventure say of the Hail Mary? He says: "As often as you salute Mary, so often does she greet you in return."

13. What means this "She greets you in return"? She is ready to give us consolation and blessings, which she obtains for us from her divine Son.

14. Why do we add the Hail Mary to the Our Father? (Answer as in lesson.)

15. When we pray to God, what do we know well? We know that because of our sins we are unworthy of the grace and assistance of God.

16. How is our prayer often? It is imperfect and faulty.

17. For what reason, therefore, do we invoke the mother of Jesus? That she may join in our prayer and intercede for us with God.

18. What other purpose have we in adding the Hail Mary to the Our Father? We thereby profess our faith in the powerful intercession of Mary.

19. Are there, then, Christians who do not venerate the Blessed Virgin? Yes; the Protestant sects do not venerate the mother of God.

20. How many parts has the Hail Mary? Two parts: A prayer of praise and a prayer of supplication.

21. Of what is the prayer of praise in the Hail Mary composed? Of the words of the Angel Gabriel: 1. "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee! blessed art thou among women." 2. Of the words which St. Elizabeth added: "And blessed is the fruit of thy womb!" to which we join the name of Jesus.

22. Of what is the second part of the Hail Mary composed? Of a prayer of supplication added by the Church.

23. What is this prayer of supplication? "Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

24. When did the Angel Gabriel speak these words? When he brought the message to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to become the mother of God.

25. What signification have the words "Hail Mary"? They are an expression of reverence, greeting, and congratulation.

26. What kind of greeting do these words contain? They contain a heavenly greeting.

27. What festival do we celebrate to commemorate this heavenly salutation? The Feast of the Annunciation, March 25.

28. What does the name Mary signify? The name Mary signifies Star of the Sea.

29. Why is Mary a veritable star of the sea? Because she illumines the sea of life for us by her glorious examples of virtue.

30. What says St. Bonaventure of the power and glory of Mary's name? He says: "Heaven exults, earth triumphs, and the angels rejoice, when it is uttered."

31. Why do we address Mary by these words: "Full of grace"? (Answer as is lesson.)

32. What, then, is the first reason? Because Mary was filled with grace even before her birth, and after her birth her grace steadily increased.

33. Which article of faith has the Catholic Church declared for this reason? That Mary was conceived without original sin. (Immaculate Conception.)

34. Why do we say further that Mary is full of grace? Because she brought forth the Author of all graces.

35. Why do we say "the Lord is with thee"? (Answer as in lesson.)

36. With what persons is God, without exception? With the just.

37. With whom is God, however, in a most especial manner? With the Blessed Virgin Mary, because she was just in the highest degree.

38. In what manner is God with Mary? 1. As a father with his daughter, whom he carefully protects. 2. As a bridegroom with his spouse, whom he dearly loves. 3. As a king with his consort, whom he holds in high esteem.

39. To what should the fact that Mary is full of grace encourage us? We should strive with her help to become daily richer in graces.

XXX.—The Angelic Salutation (Continued).

In the explanation of the Hail Mary we now come to the question, What is the meaning of the words, "Blessed art thou among women"?

That Mary is the happiest of all the daughters of Eve, because: 1. She was chosen before all to be the Mother of God; 2. She alone is Mother and Virgin at the same time; and, 3. She was made the instrument through which salvation came to mankind.

Blessed the angel as well as Elizabeth called Mary; blessed will she be called for all times, as she herself foretold, "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, for he that is mighty hath done great things unto me." It was said of her, too, in the Bible, "Blessed art thou, above all women; thou art the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honor of our people."

Mary is blessed because it was she who, on account of her virtues, was chosen from among thousands to be the Mother of the Saviour of the world. How many exalted ladies, daughters of kings and princes even, would have considered themselves most fortunate had they been selected for this great dignity! And Mary in all her humility was chosen.

St. Bonaventure says, "God might have created a greater world, a more stupendous sky, but never a greater Mother than is the Mother of God."

But Mary is most blessed to the whole human race, for she brought salvation.

Why do we add these words, "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus"?

To show that the *veneration* of Mary is inseparable from the *adoration* of Christ, and that we praise the Mother for the sake of the Son.

Jesus was united for the greatest part of His life with His Mother Mary. The shepherds found the Infant Jesus with His Mother. Jesus was subject to her. In response to her wish He performed his first miracle at the marriage of Cana. She stood beneath the cross when Jesus died. As Jesus and Mary were inseparable in life, so also is the veneration of Mary inseparable from the adoration of the Son of God.

When we think of our Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ, how can we fail to think quite involuntarily of His Mother?

Derision of the saints is an indirect derision of God, who distinguished them; so also is abuse of His Mother really an abuse of Christ Himself. These words contain the actual reason for her veneration. If, on account of her exalted virtues, she deserves to be called blessed among women, yet the real reason of her veneration is the fact that her Son is Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind.

Of what is the prayer of supplication composed?

Of the words added by the Church, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

In the first of these words we emphasize once again the high dignity, the sanctity and purity of Mary, and then we implore her powerful intercession now, i. e., in our present need and danger, in all anxieties and afflictions, but particularly in the last and most momentous hour of our life, the hour of death, which decides upon our fate for all eternity.

Why were these words added by the Church?

To remind us that we should invoke the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary frequently and in all our affairs, but especially for a happy death.

Mary is not only the Mother of God; she is also our Mother. As such she knows our cares, our sufferings, our troubles, our needs, our anxiety, and she is ever ready to help us through her intercession with God. For this reason we may, with confidence, turn to her and invoke her aid. We should, however, not only call upon her when in need, but we should venerate her at all times, be ever her loving and grateful children, and strive to imitate her great virtues. The Mother of God is particularly our help at the hour of death; she fortifies us in that terrible struggle, aids us to combat the last temptations of the evil one, and, as St. Jerome says, accompanies our souls before God's tribunal.

There is besides the Hail Mary another form of prayer particularly recalling the mystery of the Incarnation and Mary's part in it. It is called the Angelus. It is considered by the Church of particular merit, and the bell is rung three times a day to remind the faithful to say this prayer. The text is:

"The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost." Then a Hail Mary is said.

" Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word." Another Hail Mary.

" And the Word was made flesh. And dwelt among us." Finish with a Hail Mary.

Why do we say this prayer?

1. To give thanks to God for the Incarnation of Christ; 2. To honor the Blessed Virgin, and to recommend ourselves to her protection.

The Incarnation of the Son of God is not only the greatest mystery, but it is also the greatest blessing in which we could ever participate. As we can never sufficiently thank God and our Saviour for this great blessing, the ringing of the bell thrice daily reminds us to give thanks for this blessing of the Redemption. A second reason that we should honor the Blessed Mother of God and recommend ourselves to her protection.

What other prayers do we say especially to honor and invoke Mary?

1. The Rosary; 2. The Litany of Loretto; and, 3. The Salve Regina, and others.

1. The Rosary. The Rosary is divided into, (a) The joyful mysteries; (b) The sorrowful mysteries; (c) The glorious mysteries.

These three connected are called the whole Rosary or Psalter, because it consists of one hundred and fifty Hail Marys, as the Psalter numbers one hundred and fifty Psalms. The Rosary dates from the time of St. Dominic, who, in the fifteenth century, introduced it to obtain Mary's intercession against the heretics of that time.

The incessant repetition of the Hail Mary in the Rosary renders our supplication particularly earnest and intense, and the commemoration of the mysteries has for its purpose to impress the same profoundly upon our mind and heart.

This form of prayer is called a Rosary, or wreath of roses, because our many salutations are joined together like a wreath of roses. The joyful mysteries are, as it were, the green leaves; the glorious mysteries, the roses; and the sorrowful mysteries, the thorns.

2. The Litany of Loretto. So called because it was first prayed in the Grace Chapel at Loretto.

3. The Salve Regina, a beautiful prayer which you all know. There are also some other well known prayers to the Blessed Virgin, like the Memorare of St. Bernard, and others.

Let us close this instruction by resolving to honor the Blessed

Virgin in a most particular and childlike manner, to implore her assistance in all necessities and troubles, and to strive eagerly to imitate her virtues.

All girls and women especially should take Mary for their model, and among these particularly those who bear her sweet name.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day in continuation of our last instruction? Of the Hail Mary.

2. What part did we begin with to-day? The words: "Blessed art thou among women."

3. What do they express? That Mary is the happiest of all the daughters of Eve: 1. Because she was chosen before all to be the mother of God. 2. Because she alone is mother and virgin at the same time; and 3. Because she brought us salvation.

4. By whom is Mary blessed? By the Angel Gabriel, by Elizabeth, and ever since by all Catholics of the entire globe.

5. Did Mary foretell this in a spirit of prophecy? Yes, she foretold it with the words: "Behold! from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

6. Why is Mary designated the most blessed of her sex? Because she was chosen to be the mother of God.

7. Why did God select the Blessed Virgin? Because she was the most pious, the most pure, the most innocent of all.

8. What does St. Bonaventure say of the worthiness of the Blessed Virgin? He said: "God might have created a greater world, a more stupendous sky, but never a greater mother than is the mother of God."

9. For what other reason is Mary blessed among women? Because she was made the instrument of our salvation.

10. In what way did Mary bring salvation to the world? By giving birth to Jesus, who redeemed mankind again.

11. Why do we add the words: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus"? To show that the veneration of Mary is inseparable from the adoration of Christ, and that we praise the mother for the sake of the Son.

12. With whom was Jesus united for the greatest part of His life? With His blessed mother.

13. When the shepherds and the magi sought for the divine Infant at Bethlehem, whom did they find? They found Jesus with His mother.

14. With whom did Jesus go to Jerusalem in His twelfth year? With His mother and foster-father, Joseph.

15. With whom did Jesus remain uninterruptedly until His thirtieth year? With His mother, Mary.

16. Who besides His disciples was with Jesus at the marriage of Cana? His mother, Mary.

17. Why is the love of Jesus inseparable from the veneration of Mary? It is impossible that we should love Jesus and despise His mother.

18. What is therefore the real reason of our veneration of Mary? Her divine Son, Jesus Christ.

19. After the prayer of praise in the Hail Mary comes the prayer of supplication; what are the words? "Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

20. What profession do we again make in the first four words? We profess again our belief in the high dignity, the sanctity and purity of Mary.

21. What then follows? Then follows the imploring of her powerful intercession.

22. When, at what time, should Mary pray for us? 1. Now, and 2. At the hour of our death.

23. What means "now"? In our present troubles or afflictions, in which we may find ourselves.

24. When, however, should the Blessed Virgin most particularly pray for us? At the hour of our death.

25. Why should Mary pray particularly for us then? Because that hour is decisive for our eternal fate.

26. What should Mary, therefore, particularly ask for us? That we may not die unprepared, and not without receiving the last rites of the Church.

27. Now as Mary's intercession is so powerful, with what feelings ought we to approach her? With feelings of confidence.

28. What other prayer is there in special regard to Mary in her connection with the mystery of the Incarnation? The Angelus.

29. How are we reminded to say this prayer? By the ringing of the church bell three times a day.

30. Why do we say this prayer? 1. To give thanks to God for the Incarnation of Christ; and 2. To honor the Blessed Virgin, and to recommend ourselves to her protection.

31. What did I tell you concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God? That it was not only the greatest mystery, but also the greatest blessing in which mankind could participate.

32. What do we owe God for this great blessing? We owe God the greatest gratitude.

33. What other beautiful prayers do we offer up to Mary? The Rosary, the Litany of Loretto, the Salve Regina, and others.

34. By whom was the Rosary introduced? By St. Dominic.

35. How is the Rosary divided? Into the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the Glorious Mysteries.

36. To what should the frequent repetition of the Hail Mary in the Rosary induce us? To perseverance in our prayers.

37. What other prayers do we say in Mary's honor? The Litany of Loretto, the Salve Regina, the Memorare of St. Bernard, and others.

38. What is the application? We should honor the Blessed Virgin in a most particular and childlike manner, implore her assistance in all necessities and troubles, and strive eagerly to imitate her charity, patience, purity, and other virtues.

39. What reminds us to honor Mary? The pictures and statues of the Blessed Virgin in the church and at home.

40. What is the best way to venerate Mary? By imitating her virtues.

CONCLUSION.

Having arrived at the end of our instruction on the Means of Grace, which, with the two preceding instructions on Faith and the Commandments respectively, forms a complete course on the doctrines of our Holy Religion, it seems fitting that we should cast a glance backward over the path that we have wandered.

We have in our instructions on Faith been enabled to appreciate the words of the Catechism, which say, "Our religion is divine." If our Catholic religion were human work, she would not have resisted the storms of nineteen hundred years. We know her Founder was divine, that He was the Son of God, and God Himself. The divinity of our holy Church is furthermore demonstrated by the zeal, courage, resignation, and contempt of death of confessors, martyrs, and missionaries. Christianity has been spread abroad among all nations and peoples. Her divinity is proved also by her fruits and her blessings. Where Christianity is spread, there the fruits of civilization are diffused. Who does not know what the religious orders have done for the spreading of civilization by their work? Dense wildernesses have, in course of time, given place to productive, luxuriant fields. Idolatry and paganism have been banished, and the worship of the true God and virtue have taken their place. Our holy religion teaches us how to have the right faith. Everything that God has revealed, and which the Catholic Church presents to us for belief, is taught us by our holy religion, and she shows how it has come down to us either through the Bible or by tradition.

The Catholic moral doctrine, found in the Commandments of God and of the Church, prescribes two things for us: that we should hate and shun the evil; that we should love and do the good.

Since our will, in consequence of original sin, is inclined more to evil than to good, God comes to the assistance of our human frailty with His grace. In order to work our salvation we must make use of the Means of Grace which God has ordained for our salvation, namely, the holy Sacraments, sacramentals, and prayer.

May our considerations on the truths of our holy religion be blessed by God with a realization of the needs of our soul, and may we thus be led to eternal glory!

ANECDOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

To Volume III.

OF

TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

TO THE

CATECHISM

(The chapters here following correspond with the lessons in this volume.)

I.—ACTUAL GRACE.

Resistance to Grace.

In the days of St. Francis Borgia, there lived in Spain a gentleman who gave himself up to very great sins. Suddenly, in the midst of his evil ways, a terrible illness came upon him. He had near him some friends who had remained faithful to God. When they saw his sickness was dangerous, they spoke to him of the necessity of being reconciled to God, lest death should come and take him away unprepared. But he laughed at them and said: "There is plenty of time. Besides, I am not so ill as you imagine." His friends continued to speak to him of the necessity of going to confession, saying to him that the doctors had declared his case hopeless. As soon as the young man heard that word *confession,* he burst forth into angry words, and said that he would never go to confession, even although he was sure that death was at hand. St. Francis Borgia was told about the man's obstinacy, and seeing the danger he was in of losing his soul, knelt down before a crucifix, and besought our dear Lord, with tears in his eyes, not to allow that soul to perish. As he was thus praying for the poor sinner, a voice seemed to come forth from the crucifix, saying, "Go, Francis, and visit him and exhort him to repent." St. Francis went immediately with great joy, thinking that, as God Himself had sent him, he was sure of obtaining his salvation. But although he spoke to him for a long time, the sinner would not hear of making his confession. The Saint left the room and returned to the Church. He knelt down as before

and prayed with still greater fervor for his conversion. The same voice again spoke to him, "Go back once more to the dying man; take your crucifix with you: he certainly must have taken a firm resolution to lose his poor soul, if his heart is not melted at the sight of the sufferings I underwent for him." St. Francis returned to the sick man's room, who still refused to listen to him. Francis then taking the crucifix he had brought with him, placed it before the dying man's eyes. At that moment, by a miracle of God's mercy, the figure on the cross appeared as if covered with wounds and blood, as Jesus Himself was when dying on the cross. "Ah! my child," said the Saint, "look how Jesus loves you, although you have so grievously sinned against him! Oh! do not refuse this special grace." But all his exhortations were in vain. The man refused to accept this great grace, and St. Francis saw him die in his sins, a victim to his obstinacy in refusing to make use of what God had, in such a special manner, sent him for his salvation.—*His Life: Oct.* 10.

Touched by Grace.

St. Louis Bertrand was one day walking with some of his companions on a country road in the neighborhood of his monastery. Their conversation was on pious subjects; for having their minds and hearts in Heaven, their words also were about the things of Heaven. It happened that a young man was walking a little distance behind them. Under his cloak he carried a sword, and his whole appearance spoke of a man under the influence of some great passion. The religious, without taking any heed of the young man's presence, continued to speak aloud as before. The man was sufficiently near them to hear all they said. In a short time he went up to them, and, throwing away the weapon he had concealed under his clothing, cast himself on his knees before St. Louis. "Ah, my father," he cried out, "may God reward you in Heaven for what you have done for me to-day." The good father looked at the kneeling form before him, and asked him what had happened to him. "I was on my way to take revenge on an enemy who had injured me; but the words I have just now heard from your lips have so changed my heart that I am now on my knees to ask the pardon of God." "Do you forgive him who has injured you?" "Yes, father, from my inmost soul." "Then God will also forgive you." The poor sinner became reconciled to God, and to the end of his days persevered in the life of grace so wonderfully given him.—*His Life. Oct.* 9.

II.-III.—THE GRACE OF SANCTIFICATION.

The Soul in the State of Grace.

St. Catherine of Siena was permitted by God to see the beauty of a soul in the state of grace. It was so beautiful that she could not look on it; the brightness of that soul dazzled her. The blessed Raymond, her confessor, asked her to describe to him, as far as she was able, the beauty of the soul she had seen. St. Catherine thought of the sweet light of the morning, and of the beautiful colors of the rainbow, but that soul was far more beautiful. She remembered the dazzling beams of the noonday sun, but the light which beamed from that soul was far brighter. She thought of the pure whiteness of the lily and of the fresh snow, but that is only an earthly whiteness. The soul she had seen was bright with the whiteness of Heaven, such as there is not to be found on earth. "My father," she answered, "I can not find anything in this world that can give you the smallest idea of what I have seen. Oh! if you could but see the beauty of a soul in the state of grace, you would sacrifice your life a thousand times for its salvation. I asked the angel, who was with me, what had made that soul so beautiful, and he answered me, 'It is the image and likeness of God in that soul, and the Divine Grace which made it so beautiful.'"—*Her Life: Apr. 30.*

Examples of Co-operation.

The Ninevites accepted the grace which God offered them when, Jonas preaching in their midst, they proclaimed a fast, and did penance for their sins, and so escaped the punishments of God. *Jon. iii.*—St. Peter co-operated with grace when, remembering the warning Our Lord gave him, he, on hearing the cock crow, went forth and wept bitterly. *Math. xxvi.* 75.—In like manner, St. Paul, when struck down miraculously on the road to Damascus, he recognized the grace of God and exclaimed: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" He then obeyed the voice he heard. *Acts ix.* 6.

IV.—THE HOLY SACRAMENTS.

Banknote Value.

The Roman Emperors, on their accession to the throne, used to throw money to the people. One of them once thought to throw

them slips of paper signed by himself, and showing sums, more or less considerable, which the State would pay the bearer on presentation. The people, not realizing the conventional value of these papers, despised them; but some, well advised, gathered up a large number of them, and became rich in a single day.—If man can thus give value to what has no value in itself, how much more can God attach wonderful graces to common and simple elements!—*Mérault.*

St. Alphonsus.

When St. Alphonsus was lying on his deathbed he asked the fathers to give him Holy Communion, since he could no longer say Mass. One day, when there was some delay in bringing the Blessed Sacrament, he began to cry out aloud: "Oh! give me my dear Lord; when will you bring me my Jesus? Oh! go quickly, for I desire so much to be with him."—*His Life: Aug. 2.*

Neglect of the Sacraments.

A certain holy and zealous priest, addressing his people, said to them: "How many sick persons repair in the summer season to celebrated wateringplaces, at very great expense, in order to obtain the cure of some corporal disease! In the Sacraments we have admirable sources for all the ills of the soul; and these sources of grace invariably cure all those who, with proper dispositions, have recourse to them. And yet how many spiritually sick are among us, who do not avail themselves of those admirable waters, flowing through the Sacraments out of the Saviour's fountains, for the cure of all the maladies of the soul!"—*Power.*

The Two Fountains.

In the midst of a vast plain, there was a beautiful and magnificent fountain. It shed its limpid and abundant waters over the fields by means of seven little channels that were ever full. It is true that its waters sometimes appeared a little bitter, but they had a wonderful virtue. In fact, according as one drank from one stream or another, he received its salutary effects; here, old men became young and vigorous; there, the ugly, those who had any deformity, any natural defect, appeared handsome, straight, well formed; all the sick returned thence healed and strengthened. Even the bodies of the dead

were there restored to life when plunged in, with certain precautions. But better still: at this marvelous fountain the poor became rich, the wretched found happiness, sorrowful people drank gaiety and joy.—Beside this fountain there is another, whose waters also flow in great abundance; it appears, at first, to be as sweet as honey; but scarcely is it in the stomach when it produces vomiting, nervous convulsions, and often even death. Well! would you believe it! notwithstanding the daily experience of the different effects of these two fountains, although many persons, undoubtedly, come to draw water from the first, a very great number fear not to drink of the second. It is a folly, you will tell me. Doubtless it is, and a great folly. Try never to be of the number of those who are attacked by it. You understand that the first spring of which I have spoken to you are the Sacraments, whilst the second are the deceitful joys and pleasures of the earth.—*Gridel.*

V.—BAPTISM.

St. Francis and the Font.

St. Francis of Sales would often lead his young companions to the parish Church and arrange them round the sacred font where in infancy they had been baptized. "See," he would say, "this is the spot that should be dearer to us than any other, for here it was we were made children of God." Then they would say together the "Glory be to the Father" in thanksgiving for God's mercy, and kissing the font on bended knee, dispersed for their games.—*Life of St. Francis: Jan. 29.*

Louis XV. and his Children.

Religion makes no distinction between the rich and the poor; cleansed and regenerated by the same Sacrament, they have an equal right to the same favors, and he who is the most faithful to his Baptismal engagements is the greatest in the eyes of God. This is the lesson which the Dauphin, father of Louis XVI., one day inculcated on his children. Two of his sons had received only private Baptism at the time of their birth. At the age of seven or eight the sacred ceremonies were supplied. The prince, their father, called for the Baptismal parochial register in which their names were in-

serted. On opening it, he pointed out to them the name which immediately preceded theirs—it was the son of a very poor man. "You see, children," remarked the father, "in the eyes of God all ranks and conditions are equal; He allows no distinction except that made by religion and virtue. One day you will be distinguished and powerful in the eyes of the world, and this boy will not even be known; but if he prove more virtuous than you, he will be greater and more illustrious in the eyes of God."—*Power.*

VI.—BAPTISM (Continued).

Neophytes of New Caledonia.

A missionary writes: "From the day of his baptism, Louis is no longer the same. When I spoke to him of confession, he seemed quite surprised. 'Do men sin,' he said, 'when once baptized?' Admirable feeling, and one that should make us blush, that, having made so many promises to God, we should so often fall again into the same faults."

Baptism by Children.

An infidel captain, with his three children, lived in a Catholic family. The children attended the nuns' school, and, after an instruction on the necessity of Baptism, William, the eldest, speaking to one of the children of the Catholic family, said: "Have you been baptized?" "Yes," replied the other, "in my infancy." "Then baptize me," said William, "for I might die to-night, and I want to go to Heaven." And it was done: then he in turn baptized his two younger sisters. When at length the father returned home, all three rushed up to him to tell him what they had done, and to beg him also to be baptized. To please them he consented and was baptized. Would to God it may have been serious and formal, for three days later he had a sudden death, and appeared before his Maker.—*Miss. Cath.*

Baptism of St. Genesius.

During the reign of Diocletian there lived at Rome a comic actor named Genesius, who was a pagan by birth. Being chosen among others to perform a comedy in presence of the Emperor, he took

upon himself to ridicule the mysteries of the Christian religion, of which he had learnt something from friends who professed the faith. Accordingly, lying down on the stage and pretending to be sick, he exclaimed, "Alas! my friends, I feel a heavy weight upon me, and would gladly be relieved." "But what," said his companions, "shall we do to give thee ease? Shall we scrape thee with a joiner's plane to make thee lighter?" "Fool," said he, "I am resolved to die a Christian, that God may receive me on the day of my death." Upon this a priest and an exorcist, that is, two players who represented them, were summoned. These having taking their seats beside the sick man's bed, the priest began to converse with him, saying, "Well, my child, why did you send for us?" At this moment a sudden ray of Divine grace, like that which converted St. Paul, illuminated the soul of Genesius, and he was changed into another man. No longer in jest, but with a lively faith, he replied, "I have sent for you because I desire to receive the grace of Jesus Christ, and to be born again, that I may be delivered from my sins." The other players then went through the various ceremonies of Baptism, after which, according to custom, they clothed him with a white garment. Thereupon, certain actors in the garb of soldiers, to carry on the jest, seized and dragged him before the Emperor, accusing him of being a convert to the Christian religion. To the astonishment of the assembled multitude, Genesius now openly professed himself a disciple of Jesus, and declared himself ready to suffer every torment rather than abandon the faith. Upon this noble confession, Diocletian, exceedingly enraged, ordered him to be inhumanly beaten with clubs, and afterwards placed in the hands of the executioners for further torture. Being extended on the rack, he was cruelly torn with iron hooks, and burning torches were applied to various parts of his body. But in the midst of his torments he continued to cry out, "There is no other Lord of the universe but Jesus Christ. Him I adore and serve, and to Him I will adhere, though I suffer a thousand deaths for His sake." At length his head was struck off and thus he completed his glorious martyrdom.—*Butler.*

VII.—CONFIRMATION.

The Resolute Officer.

An officer, illustrious for his birth and fortune, was on the point of obtaining a very lucrative situation, when he was accused of being

a Christian—that religion excluding him, by the laws, from all offices and dignities. The governor gave him four hours for consideration, and told him to weigh well what he was going to do. During the interval which had been given him, he was visited by the Bishop, who took him by the hand, led him to the Church, and begged of him to enter the sanctuary. Here, at the foot of the altar, the Bishop pointed to the sword which the officer wore, and presenting him, at the same time, with a copy of the Gospels, asked him which he would choose. The officer, without hesitation, with his right hand took hold of the Sacred book. "Adhere, then to God," said the holy Bishop, "be faithful to him, and he will fortify you, and recompense your choice. Depart in peace." The officer went from the Church, and presenting himself before the governor, made a generous confession of his faith in Jesus Christ. Sentence of death was then pronounced upon him, and he, by expiring for his faith in sharp but passing torments, merited eternal and ineffable joys.—*Mérault.*

Fortitude of a Martyr.

Among the numerous confessors of the Faith who, during the last century, have courageously undergone torments and death in the kingdom of Tong-Quin, the name of Michael Mi is deserving of special mention. He was arrested, along with his aged father-in-law, Anthony, on the charge of being concerned in the concealment of a priest, who was taken, and who suffered with them. The poor old Anthony, who was on the verge of seventy, shuddered at the sight of the instruments of torture which were displayed before the tribunal, but Michael encouraged him by reminding him of the eternal reward which they were about to purchase so cheaply, at the price of a few short and passing sufferings. "And as to the stripes which you dread, fear not, father," said he, "I will offer myself to endure them in your place." Accordingly, after he himself had been flogged without mercy, so that his whole body was a mass of wounds and blood, he, of his own accord, lay down again upon the ground, saying to the judge, "My father is aged and infirm; take pity on him, and suffer me to be flogged in his stead." And when this was permitted, he with the greatest joy endured a second scourging, nor did a groan or sigh escape him while his wounds were being reopened, and his flesh again torn and rent

asunder. After many examinations and cruel torments, the three confessors of the Faith were at length condemned to be beheaded, and set out with serene and joyful countenances for the place of execution. Michael Mi distinguished himself especially by his undaunted courage. "Give me some money," said the executioner to him, "and I will promise to cut off your head at a single blow, so that you may have less to suffer." "Cut it into a hundred pieces if you like," said the Christian hero, "it matters not, provided that you manage somehow to cut it off. As for money, I have plenty at home, but I would rather that it should be given to the poor." So saying, he bent his head to receive the fatal stroke, and went to receive the triple crown of faith, charity, and filial piety.—*Annals of Prop. Faith.*

Negligence of a Bishop.

One day, a man, in deep affliction, went to St. Maurice, Bishop of Ghent, and earnestly besought him to come to his house, to confirm his child, who was very ill, and must soon die. It was the custom then to administer that Sacrament even to children who had not yet the use of reason. The bishop acceded to his request, but his occupations not having permitted him to go immediately, the child died during that short interval. When the holy man learned the news, he was in such trouble that he bewailed, for several days, with copious and bitter tears, what he called his negligence. His grief at length reached such a point that he persuaded himself he was no longer worthy of being a bishop, and fled to England, where he took service as gardener in a prince's household, the better to conceal his former dignity. Long after, his friends succeeded in discovering the place of his retreat, and after much persuasion, prevailed upon him to return to Ghent. What a high esteem must not that holy bishop have had for the great Sacrament of Confirmation! —*Schmid.*

VIII.—THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

St. Antony and the Mule.

St. Antony of Padua was preaching at Toulouse, where great numbers of men denied the Real Presence. He was speaking with great force, when suddenly one of them exclaimd: "All well and

good: you can prove anything, if you have a good flow of language; but come to plain facts: can you prove your doctrine by a miracle?" "However unworthy I may be, I think God will grant me this for your conversion. What miracle do you ask for?" "Well, I have a mule, and if it falls on its knees in the presence of what you call the Blessed Sacrament, I will believe, like you, that the consecrated Host contains its Creator and mine." The proposal was peculiar, but St. Antony accepted it, knowing how God had more than once worked miracles by means of animals. Accompanied by large numbers of people, he goes in solemn procession to the public square, where the heretic awaited them with his mule. The Saint then apostrophized it and said: "Creature of God, in the name of thy Creator, whom I hold in my hands, I command thee to fall down and adore!" and immediately the poor animal was on its knees, and there remained while the crowd passed to and fro to see it. At the Saint's command it arose and went to its food. The owner was the first to cry out, "I renounce my errors for ever; I believe now in the Real Presence. I am a Catholic." Many others followed his example, and entered the true Church.—*Postel.*

St. Tharcisius, First Martyr of the Eucharist.

A child was the first to have the honor of martyrdom for the cause of the Real Presence. One day some pagan soldiers met him carrying the Blessed Sacrament to his home, as was not unusual in the early days of persecution. They seized him and threatened to ill treat him, unless he made known what it was he was carrying; but he would never betray the secret species. So they struck him with sticks and stoned him to death. They searched his body and his garments, but God permitted that they should find nothing, and they fled away in terror.—*His Life.*

A Conversion at Marseilles.

An English Protestant was visiting a Church in Marseilles. Through curiosity, or perhaps in the hope of surprising some Catholic contradicting in his acts his profession of faith in the Real Presence, he hid behind one of the columns to see, without being seen, what went on in the Church. The Masses were over, and he was

alone. As he expected, the Sacristan came shortly to do up the sanctuary. This was a man of real piety and lively faith, and evidently thinking himself to be alone in the Church; whenever he passed before the tabernacle, he made a most profound and prolonged genuflexion. At this sight the Protestant felt his heart soften within him; he laid aside his prejudice, studied the Catholic religion for himself, and was not long in embracing it.—*Cat. en Ex.*

IX.—THE HOLY EUCHARIST (Continued).

A Sacrilegious Parody.

In a village of Prussia a blasphemer took it into his head to turn into ridicule the most Holy Sacrament. Sitting down to table with his companions, he takes some bread and wine, and pronounces over them with mock solemnity, "This is my body; this is my blood!" He then pretends to give communion to those around him, and said: "Take ye all!" At length he communicates himself, but no sooner had he completed the parody, than he laid his head on the table, and in a few moments he died. He was buried outside the Catholic Cemetery, A. D. 1807.—*Schmid.*

God's Sentry.

In 1847 the pastor of a Church in Orleans began to notice that nearly every day, from one to three, there came and remained in Church a soldier of noble bearing and pious demeanor; there he remained straight as a pillar and motionless before the grating of the Sanctuary. A captain came one day to visit the Church, and the priest explains this to him, and in a short time in comes the soldier as usual. The captain recognizes him as his confidential servant. Going then all to the sacristy, the captain inquires what he is doing there. "Captain," he replied, "I am keeping two hours' sentry before the good God. There are sentries everywhere: in Paris, the President has four; here, my General has two; the Prefect has a sentry, the Bishop, and so on. Now the good God is greater than all these, and yet He has no sentry, so I go on duty for Him when I am free, and I assure you the time is not long, for I love Him, as

you do yourself, captain." This captain was a religious man, and encouraged his soldier to continue his good work for God.—*Cath. Anecd.*

X.—THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

King Ethelred at Mass.

Seeing the ravages which were made in the West of England, in the year 871, by the Danes, and fearing that they would not be slow to invade the Eastern part of the country, the pious and brave king Ethelred marched on to meet them, with an army small as to numbers, but fired with a martial spirit. On the morning of the battle, he attended the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and received Holy Communion, to prepare himself for the desperate combat in which he was about to engage. During Mass a message was sent him, announcing that the enemy, in battle array, was advancing, and that it was necessary he should hurry to lead his troops to battle. But Ethelred continued hearing Mass with the same fervor and recollection as before. Soon arrived other messengers telling him that not a minute was to be lost if he wished to prevent the enemy from seizing on the most advantageous positions; but Ethelred answered that he would not leave the Church until he had united himself to the Conqueror of conquerors, and had obtained His blessing. When he had communicated, and when the Mass was concluded, he arose full of burning ardor, placed himself at the head of his army, and in a few hours gained a most brilliant victory over the Danes.—*Lingard.*

Legend of St. Isidore.

Being in the employ of a Spanish farmer, St. Isidore yet contrived to get to Mass every morning, though he had much to bear to do so, from his employer and others. A graceful legend says that one morning, while he was still at Mass, his master, going into the fields, found two oxen, guided by an angel, drawing the plough behind them. From that time forth, far from preventing Isidore from going to Church, the employer gave him every encouragement to go, and thanked God for giving him one who brought Heaven's blessing upon the farm.—*His Life: May 10.*

A Perpetual Sacrifice.

Illustrative examples may easily be found by means of a simple calculation. For every 15° of longitude, west of Greenwich, the day will be an hour behind us. Hence, with the aid of a map, a wide range of countries can be named in which Mass can be offered, when the hour for offering it with us is passed.

XI.—THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS (Continued).

The Jew and the Sieve.

A Jew was amusing himself in a public square when there passed a priest, who, accompanied by a crowd, carried the most holy Viaticum to a sick person. All the people on bended knees rendered due homage of adoration to the most Holy Sacrament; the Jew alone made no movement, nor gave any token of reverence. This being seen by a poor woman, she exclaimed, "O miserable man, why do you not show reverence to the true God present in this Divine Sacrament?" "What true God?" said the Jew sharply. "If this was so, would not there be many gods, since on each of your altars there is one during Mass?" The woman instantly took a sieve, and holding it up to the sun, told the Jew to look at the rays which passed through it, and then added, "Tell me, Jew, are there many suns which pass through the openings of this sieve, or only one?" And the Jew answering that there was but one sun, "Then," replied the woman, "why do you wonder that an incarnate God, veiled in the Sacrament, though one, invisible, and unchangeable, should, through excess of love, place Himself in His true and Real Presence on different altars?" By means of this illustration, he was led to confess the truth of the Real Presence.—*Power.*

The Virtuous Page.

St. Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, had in her service as page a pious and faithful youth, whom she was accustomed to employ in the distribution of her alms. One of his fellow pages, filled with envy at the confidence reposed in him, determined to effect his ruin, and accordingly suggested to the king that he was regarded with too much favor by the saintly queen. The slander was believed, and the king,

stung with jealousy, resolved to take away the life of the page. For this purpose he gave orders to the master of a limekiln, that if, on a certain day, he should send to him a certain page to inquire whether he had executed the king's commands, he should at once seize him and cast him into the furnace, for that he had been guilty of a grievous crime, and deserved death. On the day appointed he called for the youth, and having given the message that had been agreed upon, he sent him to deliver it. Now it happened that the page on his way to the kiln passed by a Church at the very moment when the bell was ringing for the Elevation. As it had always been his pious custom in such a case not to pass on until the Holy Sacrifice was ended, he entered the Church, and knelt down to hear the remainder of the Mass. When it was concluded, reflecting that he had not heard an entire Mass that day according to his usual practice, he remained in the Church and heard another. Meanwhile the king became impatient to know whether his designs had succeeded, and, by a wonderful Providence of God, despatched the accuser himself to inquire whether his orders had been executed. This being the very message agreed upon with the master of the kiln, the unhappy youth was immediately seized, and, in spite of all his remonstrances, cast amid the burning lime, where he was quickly consumed. As soon as the Mass was concluded, the page who had been first despatched hastened on to deliver his message. Upon inquiring whether the king's orders had been executed, he was told that they had, and he returned with this mesage to the king. The latter, seeing him return, was struck with fear and amazement, and, upon hearing the circumstances, perceived at once the innocence of the youth, and admired the Justice and Providence of God, who, while He protected and preserved the virtuous page, allowed the very punishment designed for him to fall on the head of his calumniator.—*Butler.*

XII.—HOLY COMMUNION.

The Enchanted Bread.

During the cruel persecution which raged against the Christian religion in the kingdom of Tong-Quin under the tyrant Minh Menh, the grandfather of the present monarch, the power and efficacy of the Holy Eucharist in sustaining the courage of the martyrs was

manifest even to the infidels. While these glorious champions of Jesus Christ were cruelly racked and scourged, or their flesh was torn off their bones with red-hot pincers, the Holy Name of Jesus was ever on their lips, and they continued to profess their faith with undaunted courage. The Mandarins, amazed at a fortitude so far beyond the power of human nature, attributed it with truth to the Heavenly Food which the Christians partook of in their assemblies. "Truly," they would say, "this man has been eating of that enchanted bread which casts a spell upon the soul."—*Annals of Prop. of Faith.*

The Courageous Nuns.

A gentleman went to visit a hospital which was under the care of the Sisters. During the time of his visit, an operation had to be performed on one of the patients, which caused her intense pain, and her cries of anguish resounded throughout the house, rending the hearts of all who heard them. The gentleman could not endure them, and instantly left the ward. The Sisters alone remained calm and firm at the side of the poor woman. "How can these good Sisters stand there so courageously," he asked of the superioress, "when even I, who have strong nerves, can not endure it any longer?" "Sir," she replied, pointing to the door of the tabernacle in their little chapel, "it is there they get that courage and strength which you so much admire. It is Jesus Himself who gives it to them in the Holy Eucharist."—*Chisholm.*

The Boy in the Fire.

It was the custom at Constantinople in the sixth century, at times when the Blessed Sacrament was renewed in the Ciborium, to distribute among the young and innocent children the Sacred Hosts which remained from the last Consecration. It happened one day that a little Jewish boy was brought from the schools along with other children for this purpose, and received Communion along with them. On reaching home, his father, who was a glass-founder by trade, questioned him as to the cause of his returning so late from school. The child simply related what had happened, whereupon the father, blinded by fury and carried away by his bitter hatred of the Christian religion, seized the child and flung him into the red hot furnace where the glass was melted. The mother, unaware of what had happened, on discovering her loss, filled the house with

her cries and lamentations, seeking everywhere her missing child. On the third day, happening to pass by the furnace, she heard a voice calling her by name. On opening the furnace door, she beheld her child seated in the midst of the flames, alive and uninjured, and not appearing to suffer the least inconvenience from the raging element. Having clasped him in her arms, she asked him how it was that he was not burnt up in the midst of the red-hot coals. "Mother," said he, "a lady dressed in purple often came to me during these three days, and threw water round me to put out the fire. She also brought me food." The whole city was soon filled with the news of this prodigy, which resulted in the immediate conversion of the child and his mother. The unhappy father, however, continued hardened in his infidelity, and was condemned to death by the Emperor Justinian for the attempted murder of his child.—*Anecd. Chrét.*

XIII.—HOLY COMMUNION (Continued).

Blessed Imelda.

In the fourteenth century there lived at Bologna a holy virgin named Imelda, of tender years, but extraordinary piety. At the age of eleven she had been admitted into the Dominican Convent in that city, where she became the admiration of the community on account of her exact observance of the religious rule, her spirit of penance, and the fervor of her devotion. Above all things, it was her delight to spend hours in prayer before the Holy Sacrament, holding sweet converse with the Divine Spouse of her soul; and it was her longing desire to be admitted to his embraces in Holy Communion. This, however, had never been permitted by her confessor, on account of her tender years, though she frequently approached to the Sacrament of Penance, and had often and earnestly implored him to admit her to the Heavenly Banquet. It happened one day, on the eve of our Lord's Ascension, that all the religious were approaching the altar, while Imelda alone was prevented from sharing in the Sacred Feast. On beholding the Divine Fountain of grace flowing so near, while she was excluded from quenching her ardent thirst with its living waters, Imelda was overwhelmed with grief, and kneeling before the altar, poured out the longings of her soul at the feet of her Beloved, protesting that her only desire on earth was to

be united to Him in the Holy Sacrament. At the same moment, a Sacred Host was seen descending from above, until it remained suspended over the head of the holy virgin, who was now absorbed in an ecstasy of love. Her confessor, perceiving what had happened, ran to the spot, and taking with reverence the Host upon the paten, in obedience to this evident sign of the Divine Will, placed it on the tongue of the devout virgin. No sooner had she received the sacred particle, than the rapture of love which consumed her soul at the possession of her Divine Spouse, burst asunder the ties which united it to the body, and she was borne in the embraces of her Beloved to the eternal sight and enjoyment of Him in Paradise.—*Saints' Lives.*

Neglect of Thanksgiving.

St. Philip Neri one day, to his sorrow, noticed that a person who had just received Communion was getting up and going away. He at once told two altar boys to take a lighted taper each, and to accompany the person home. Surprised at this, the young man asked what it could mean, and on the children referring him to St. Philip, he went to enquire of the Saint, who said: "When the priest carries the Blessed Sacrament, he is always accompanied by two acolytes bearing lighted candles: the same honor, it seems to me, is due to any one who carries it in his heart!" Recognizing his fault, the young man returned to Church and made a due thanksgiving.—How many nowadays might take this lesson to heart!"—*Cat. en Ex.*

St. Francis and the Soldier.

St. Francis of Sales was on one occasion preparing a garrison of soldiers for the Easter Communion, when it happened that one of them, through forgetfulness, ate a piece of bread at the mess table before going to receive the Blessed Sacrament. His comrades, who had observed him eating, were extremely shocked at seeing him afterwards go up to the altar and receive Communion. When Mass was over, they loaded him with reproaches ,and the officer in charge went so far as to tell him that he had committed a horrible sacrilege. Hearing these words, the poor man, terrified at the thought of what he had done, was reduced to the brink of despair. He sighed, wept, and bitterly bewailed his sin; but he met with very little compassion from his comrades. At length one of them, moved at the sight of

his grief, advised him to apply for advice to the *good father,* which was the name they had given to St. Francis. The soldier did as he was recommended, but no sooner had he come into the presence of the Saint, than he was so overcome with grief at the remembrance of his fault that he was unable to utter a word. St. Francis, moved with compassion at the sight of his affliction, begged of him in the kindest and most affectionate words to make known to him the cause of his grief. "Alas! father," said the soldier, "I have committed a great crime. I went to Holy Communion after breaking my fast. What must I do? If you do not help me I am lost." "But did you do it on purpose?" "No, indeed, father," said the soldier, "I would die a thousand times rather than commit so great a crime on purpose." "Well, then," replied St. Francis, "I assure you that God has already pardoned you. Be comforted, and do not, on account of what could only be a venial sin of neglect, go and fall into a mortal sin of despair." "But, father," said the soldier, much comforted, "will you please to give me some penance for my sin." "Certainly," said the Saint, "go and say one Our Father and one Hail Mary, and I promise you that God will be satisfied." So saying, he sent back the good man to his barracks, full of joy and consolation.—*His Life: Jan. 29.*

The Devout Communicant.

We read in the life of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, that being permitted by his confessor to receive Holy Communion every Sunday, he divided the week between his thanksgiving and preparation, consecrating three days to each. The same is related of another devout soul, who, in arranging his devotions, observed the following plan. Sunday, the day of his Communion, was spent by him in *union* and interior converse with our Blessed Lord. Monday was a day of *thanksgiving* for the rich treasure which he had received. On Tuesday he continually *offered* and consecrated himself to God. Wednesday was spent in constant *petitions* to Our Lord for his own wants and those of the Church. On Thursday he began his preparation for his next Communion, spending that day entirely in acts of *faith* and *adoration.* Friday was a day of *humiliation* and *contrition,* but of *hope* and *confidence* in the divine mercy. Finally, Saturday was devoted to acts of *love* and *desire.—Catholic Anecdotes.*

XIV.—THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

The Ant-hill.

A traveler found on his road the root of an old tree. He struck the root with his stick, and hundreds of frightful black insects came out of the old root and went away. What was it made those insects go away? It was the little noise of the stick striking on the wood over their heads that frightened them and made them go away.—The sinner has begun his Confession. The devils are still dwelling in his soul, like the insects in the old root. But the words of absolution have sounded in his soul. In the ears of the devils the words of absolution sound louder and more dreadful than ten thousand thunders. In haste they dash themselves out of the soul. They do not stop till they have buried themselves in the deepest hell, and hid themselves from the sound of words so terrible to them.—*Furniss.*

Theodosius and St. Ambrose.

The Emperor Theodosius stained his hands in the blood of his subjects, by permitting in haste the slaughter of several thousands in Thessalonica. St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, wrote to him a strong letter of remonstrance, exhorting him to repentance and satisfaction. When later on, the Emperor, without complying with this injunction, presented himself at the doors of the Church, St. Ambrose met him, respectfully refusing him admittance. The Prince urged that David also had sinned against his people, to which the Bishop replied: "Having imitated his sin, imitate also his repentance." Theodosius submitted; he did penance for his sin, and was afterwards reconciled to the Church, a true model of humility and obedience.

The Hermit and the Robber.

A certain hermit, who had lived for many years in great reputation for sanctity, began at length to entertain dangerous thoughts of self-complacency. Filled with these temptations, he was setting out one morning to visit a neighboring Church, when he beheld, seated on the banks of the river which flowed past his little cell, a poor man, who appeared to be weeping bitterly. On approaching him, he perceived that the afflicted man was a notorious robber, the terror of the surrounding country. The hermit was about to retrace his steps, when the man advanced to meet him, threw himself at his

feet, confessed his crimes, and begged to know if he might ever hope for pardon. The hermit, astonished and shocked at hearing the recital of so many enormous sins, and, comparing them with his own innocent and blameless life, began to swell with pride, and, in tones of indignation, exclaimed: "Dost *thou* hope for pardon, thou wicked sinner? Sooner shall roses bloom upon this dry staff, than a Just God grant forgiveness to such sins as thine!" So saying, he turned away, leaving the poor sinner on the brink of despair. The hermit had not proceeded far when the staff which he carried in his hand became rooted in the ground. He endeavored to pull it out, but it resisted all his efforts, and became every moment more firmly seated in the soil. Then he beheld bud, and leaf, and flower sprouting forth, until at last the dry stick was laden with beautiful roses; and at the same time he heard a voice whispering, "Sooner shall roses bloom on the barren staff than a good God refuse mercy to the repenting sinner, or grant it to the proud one." Filled with shame and contrition, the hermit fell on his knees, and, with many tears, begged pardon for his sin; then, rising, he once more endeavored to release his staff. This time it yielded to his grasp, and, bearing it in his hand, he returned in haste to the spot where he had left the robber. "See, brother," said he, showing him the staff all covered with roses, "the wonder which God has worked to convince *me* of my fault, and *you* of His tender mercy. Fear not that God should refuse to pardon you. In the Church He has left an abundant fountain of grace, His Precious Blood, in which he who sincerely repents may wash away the blackest crimes. Come, then, with me to my cell, that together we may avail ourselves of this means of grace, and bewail our sins for the rest of our lives." Much comforted, the robber dried his tears, and followed the hermit to his cell. Here they planted the staff before the door, and it grew into a beautiful bush, the sight of which served as a continual encouragement to persevere in a spirit of humility, and firm hope in the Divine Mercy.—*The Little Flower Garden.*

XV.—THE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

St. Angela of Foligno.

Angela of Foligno had in her youth the misfortune to conceal some sins in confession. Fear and shame closed her lips for some

years, when one day she fervently invoked the aid of St. Francis of Assisi, towards whom she felt great devotion. He appeared to her and pointed out the confessor she was to go to. Next morning she followed his advice and with true repentance made a general confession, and so repaired the past. She now felt intense joy in the heart, and advanced rapidly in virtue, till at length, through God's mercy, she died in the odor of sanctity.—*Dumont.*

The Unhappy Sinner.

A certain rich man in the Netherlands, having fallen into a grievous sin, was so overwhelmed with confusion, that it seemed to him as if death, or even damnation, was preferable to the shame of confessing his guilt. He was, however, grievously tormented in conscience, nor did he see any hope of relief, until he happened at Antwerp to hear a preacher say from the pulpit that if we have forgotten a sin, we can obtain pardon for it without confessing it. Upon this he determined to do all in his power to blot out the sin from his memory, and with this object, he gave himself up to every kind of pleasure and worldly amusement. It was all to no purpose, for the memory of his crime still continued to haunt him. Hearing that a change of scene and fresh objects of interest frequently efface from the mind the memory of past events, he set out upon his travels, visiting various countries, and spending many months in journeying by sea and land. So far, however, from forgetting his sin, there seemed hardly a moment when it was not present in his mind, tormenting him almost beyond endurance. Finally, he gave himself up to the study of mathematics, which he had often heard was a subject of such engrossing interest to a diligent student, as completely to occupy the mind, to the exclusion of everything else. This plan, after a fair trial, he found equally ineffectual. At length, weary of his life, he determined to put an end to it, and actually entered his carriage to proceed to a certain place, where he thought of executing his purpose. On his way thither it happened, through the merciful Providence of God, that he overtook a religious of his acquaintance and offered him a seat in his vehicle. In the course of the conversation Confession was mentioned, upon which the gentleman exclaimed abruptly, "Why do you speak of that?" These words awakened the suspicions of the priest, who spoke so earnestly to the unhappy man, that the latter acknowledged that he had

resolved to hang himself, because he could not confess a certain sin, and was unable any longer to endure the reproaches of his conscience. Upon this the religious assured him that he knew of a way by which he could afford him certain relief. Having arrived at their destination, the priest proposed to his friend a walk in the neighboring wood. Here they returned to the subject of their conversation, and the priest mentioned various sins which would be likely to create shame in the breast of a sinner. At length he named the crime which was the subject of his friend's long and bitter remorse, upon which the gentleman exclaimed, "That is it, father; that is the very sin the remembrance of which drives me to despair." "Kneel down then," said the priest, "and since you have now told me what the sin is, accuse yourself of it and the rest of your faults. I will then absolve you from all." The sinner at these words threw himself on his knees, and freely opened his heart. Moved by the grace of God, to which the chief obstacle was now removed by a sincere Confession, he bitterly lamented his past sins, and received absolution in excellent disposition. Ever after he was wont to exclaim, "Oh, Confession, what peace, what happiness you bestow upon the soul!"—*Gibson.*

XVI.—CONTRITION.

St. Ambrose and the Dog.

St. Ambrose tells a story about a little dog, most affectionate and attached to its master. One day the latter went out of the house. When he came back his face was covered—he had a mask on. He opened the door and walked in. The dog did not know him again, because his face was covered. So it barked at him, jumped on him, and bit the end of his finger a little, and it began to bleed. Then the master uncovered his face. The dog, looking up, saw that it had been biting its own master. Great was the sorrow of the little dog when it found it had been biting its own master. It lay down on the floor, with its head on the ground, and began to moan most sorrowfully. Then the master came to it, patting it on the head. But the poor dog never looked up in the master's face any more. The master did everything he could to take away the distress of the poor dog. He brought it meat to eat, and water to drink. But no—the poor dog would no more eat or drink. After a while

it rose and went down the steps which led to the cellar, and threw itself into a deep hole. For three days and three nights the dog stopped in this hole, neither eating nor drinking, but moaning most pitifully. Towards the end of the three days its moans became fainter and fainter. At last its sorrowful moans were heard no more. The poor creature was dead! And this dog died of a broken heart—broken with sorrow, because it had accidentally, without meaning it, done a little injury to its master.—O sinner, learn a lesson from that dumb creature.—*Furniss.*

Mercy for Every Sin.

A certain woman, who was a great sinner, was one day crossing a Church, which she had entered with the sole intention of shortening her way, when she perceived a number of people crowding in, as if to assist at some public service. Moved by curiosity, she took her seat among the rest, and the crowd increasing, she soon found herself so surrounded that it was impossible to think of withdrawing. Soon after, a venerable priest entered the pulpit, and began to preach on the Goodness of God to sinners. Among other things, he several times repeated these words, "My brethren, there is mercy for every sin, provided that the sinner repents." These words touched the heart of the woman, and became deeply impressed upon her mind. No sooner was the sermon ended, than this poor sinner made her way through the crowd, and as the preacher came down from the pulpit, pulled him by the sleeve, saying to him with great simplicity, "Father, is it really true that there is pardon for every sin?" "Certainly," he replied, "God forgives all sinners, if they only repent." "But there are many kinds of sinners," she answered; "does God forgive them all without any exception?" "Assuredly he does," replied the priest, "provided that they detest their sins." "But will He pardon me," said the woman, "who for fifteen years have been committing the most grievous crimes?" "Undoubtedly He will," replied the Missioner, "if you only detest them and give up committing them." "If that is the case, father," said the woman, "please to tell me at what hour you can hear my Confession." "Immediately," said the priest, pointing to his Confessional. "Kneel down there, and I will be with you directly." Accordingly, having returned from the sacristy, he heard her Confession, which she made with sentiments of the deepest com-

punction. Her Confession being completed, the poor woman acquainted her Confessor with the extreme danger to which she would be exposed were she to return to her usual place of abode to pass the night. As, however, it was impossible at that hour to procure her another shelter, he allowed her to remain in the Church during the night, a permission of which she gladly availed herself. On the following morning, when the doors were opened, she was found lifeless in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin. There, prostrate on the ground, which she had watered with her tears, she had bewailed the sins of her life so sincerely, that she had expired from excess of grief, a true victim of penance, and striking example of the truth of those words, which had been the means of her conversion, "There is mercy for every sin, provided the sinner repents." —*Cath. Anecd.*

The True Penitent.

In the ages of Faith, a certain penitent fell into a grievous crime, and having accused him of it, asked if he might hope for pardon. "Certainly," replied the confessor, "if you are ready to perform the penance imposed on you, viz., seven years' penance." "What," replied the sinner, "I thought a lifetime of penance would be too little." "Well, then, you will fast for three days only." "Father, Father, enjoin me a due penance." Then said the confessor: "Say one *Our Father,* and I assure you your sin will be forgiven." At these words, the penitent heaved a sigh and fell down dead, through the intensity of his sorrow, which was truly sovereign.—*Gaume.*

The Girl's Mistake.

A girl was once listening to a sermon. Amongst other things she heard the priest say, that if people want to make a good confession they must be more sorry for their sins than for anything else. When the sermon was over the people went away. The girl remained behind. She went to the priest and said, "Please, your reverence, I think I made a bad confession." "Why do you think so?" answered the priest. "I will tell you," said the girl. "You said in your sermon to-day that if we want to make a good confession our sorrow for sin must be greater than our sorrow for anything else. When I went to confession I remember that I did not cry for my sins. But when my poor mother died I remember that I cried

very much. So I am afraid that my sorrow for my mother's death was greater than my sorrow for my sins." "Answer me one question," said the priest. "Tell me, if you could bring your mother back to life again by committing a mortal sin, would you commit a mortal sin?" "Oh, no," said the girl, "I would not commit a mortal sin for anything." "Then," said the priest, "you love God really more than your mother." "Yes," answered the girl reluctantly. "Then do not be afraid. Although you cried for your mother's death and did not cry for your sins, yet you were really in your heart more sorry for your sins than for your mother's death."—*Furniss.*

The Man in Chains.

There was a man in prison chained fast to the wall. There were chains round his arms, and his legs, and feet. He wanted to get away, so he tried to loosen the chains. He worked very hard. At last he got the chains away from his arms. Then he slipped his feet out of the chains. He got his right leg away. But, when he came to work at the chain on the left leg, he found it impossible to get it away. Take notice, it was all the same to him whether he was held fast to the wall by one chain only, or by several chains, for he could not get away. In like manner, as long as the devil holds the soul by one mortal sin, the soul can not get away from him nor have any of its sins forgiven: contrition must be universal.—*Furniss.*

XVII.—THE RESOLUTION OF AMENDMENT.

The Inveterate Swearer.

A soldier had a bad habit of swearing. One day he asked an acquaintance to give him a help in some difficulty. This person, who knew the soldier's bad habit, replied: "I can take no interest in one who is always swearing." "Well," replied the other, "I should be glad enough to give it up, but I can't." "Nonsense; just make a firm resolution, and you'll succeed: I'll give you a sovereign if you pass the day without swearing." The soldier accepted the bargain; though he had many temptations, he resisted manfully, and succeeded in keeping his firm resolution. He thus won the sovereign. But the amendment effected at first through a human motive he afterwards kept through a higher one. Such is the power of will in a man who is determined to keep the resolution he makes.—*Schmid.*

The Gambler and his Dog.

A gambler, who often lost in a moment more than he gained in a week, always had a dog with him called Phylax. A friend met him one day without the dog, and wondered why that was. "Ah!" he replied, "the last time I brought Phylax to the house I'm going to, he got so many kicks and blows that he has not forgotten them, and nothing will induce him to go there again." "Then Phylax is wiser than his master," said the other, "who, so often duped there, returns again and again to the house!"—A true image of the sinner, who, so often ruined in his soul in some occasion of sin, returns to that occasion, through lack of efficacious resolution.—*Melker.*

The Bundle of Sticks.

A monk, told by a young man that he had tried to correct all his faults, but without success, replied: "I am not surprised; take that bundle of sticks and break it in two." After one or two useless efforts, the young man replied it was impossible. "Truly," said the monk: "but untie it, separate the sticks and you'll be able to break them separately. So with your faults; attacked all at one time you can do nothing with them; take them one by one, and you'll succeed.—*Dumax.*

The Bag of Serpents.

A certain man used to carry about with him a bag full of poisonous, stinging, deadly serpents. One night he laid the bag of serpents down on the floor. He forgot to fasten it up, and went to bed. During the night all the serpents crept out of the bag. They went and twisted themselves round the man while he was asleep. In the middle of the night the man awoke. He was dreadfully frightened when he found the serpents twisted round his head, and arms, and legs, and feet, and all his body. What was he to do? If he stirred the least, these serpents would bite and sting him. The bite or sting of any one of these serpents was sure to be his death! So he lay as still as if he had been lying in the grave. He called out to somebody to get a pan of warm milk and set it down in the middle of the floor. This was done. The serpents soon smelt the warm milk. First one great serpent untwisted itself from his arm, and went to the warm milk. Then another serpent followed, and then another. At

last every one of the serpents untwisted itself from the man's body, and he was saved from death! This man could not get away from the serpents of himself. He was obliged to ask somebody to help him. Every mortal sin is a serpent round the soul. The sinner can not get away from these serpents of himself. But if he prays to God, God will make these serpents go away.—*Furniss.*

The Duke of Nemours.

It happened, about the year 1644, that the Duke of Nemours died in a duel which he fought against some one who had offended him. He died directly after committing a mortal sin. He died without Confession, he had but a single moment before dying to prepare himself for death. In that one moment, however, he prayed to God. There was a holy nun of the order of the Visitation, called Sister Mary Martignat: God let her know that the soul of this prince had been saved. In the last moment of his life he received into his heart the grace of making a true and sincere act of contrition for his sins. He had not lost the faith, she says, so he was ready to receive this grace into his heart as a match receives fire. This Act of Contrition saved his soul from hell. She said that it was a most wonderful thing that God saved him; because, commonly only those who lead a good life are saved. She saw that when he was saved a million of other souls were lost; it was not on his own account that God gave him this grace, but on account of that article of the Creed: the Communion of the Saints, that is, because others prayed for him. She saw that the devil fully expected to have his soul, and he was never so disappointed since he was in hell; she saw this soul in the deepest part of the flames of purgatory, and that it would very likely remain there till the day of judgment. It was covered and surrounded by fiery thorns which hung down on all sides of it.—How good God is, how His ways are above the ways of men. A man commits a murder, they hang him; he may be very sorry for it, no matter, they will not forgive him; they hang him. A man commits the most terrible crimes against God, the man is sorry, God forgives him!—*Furniss.*

"Keep Away."

A boy went into a wild beast show. Among the wild beasts there was a great strong lion shut up in a cage, with iron bars in front of it. Somebody told the boy not to go too near the lion's cage,

but *to keep away* lest the lion should get hold of him. The boy took no notice of what was said to him. He went close up to the lion's cage. When the lion saw the boy standing close to the cage, he put his great large paw through the bars. He took hold of the boy's arm, and tore it away from his body. The boy screamed out frightfully. But it was too late, his arm was gone!—Why did the boy lose his arm? Because he did not *keep away* from the lion. Why do people commit sin and lose their souls? Because they do not *keep away* from temptation. Therefore do you keep away from temptation, from bad company, bad books, and dangerous places.—*Furniss.*

XVIII.—CONFESSION.

The Shepherd's Death.

It is related in the life of St. Louis, king of France, that God often gave him the grace of being able to penetrate the secrets of hearts. One day, whilst passing through one of the provinces of his kingdom, he came to a shepherd who was grazing his flock. He approaches him with his usual kindness, looks at him with interest, puts some questions to him, and at length says: "My son, I know the bad state of your conscience; it is three years since you made a sincere confession; I beg of you, if you value your soul, to delay no longer in returning to God; let me take you back to the fold of the Good Shepherd, for death is already at your door. God is willing to forgive you all your sins." The shepherd, all amazed, shuddered at these words; he made a strict examination of his conscience, and confessed his sins with sincere contrition, having earnestly besought the Lord to give him that grace. But behold what need he had to do so; three days after, he died a sudden death, in the very field where he was feeding his flock.—*Schmid.*

Confession During the Pestilence.

During the plague which devastated England in 1349, the Bishop of Bath and Wells felt himself constrained to address a letter of advice to his clergy, in which, among other things, he says, "Desiring, as we are bound to do, the salvation of souls . . . we, on the obedience you have sworn to us, urgently enjoin upon you and command you, that you at once and publicly instruct and induce

all who are sick of the present malady, or shall happen to be taken ill, that, *in articulo mortis,* if they are not able to obtain any priest, they should make confession of their sins (according to the teaching of the Apostle), even to a layman, and if a man is not at hand, then to a woman. We exhort you to proclaim publicly, that such confession can be most salutary and profitable to them for the remission of their sins, according to the teaching and the sacred canons of the Church." (Such confession was not obligatory nor sacramental.)—*Gasquet.*

Mgr. Cheverus and the Protestant.

The confidence inspired by Mgr. Cheverus, Bishop of Boston, was such that a great number of Protestant ladies of rank and position came to open to him their hearts, and to reveal to him the secrets of their consciences. One of them one day said that the precept of confession would for ever prevent her embracing the Catholic Faith. "No, no," said the Bishop, very gently, "you haven't as much repugnance for confession as you imagine: on the contrary, you feel the need and value of it. All these weeks past, you have been coming to me and making a confession without suspecting it. Confession is nothing but making known the troubles of your conscience, as you have been doing, to receive my advice."—*Hamon.*

Ferdinand and his Confessor.

The Emperor Ferdinand, preparing for confession, offered an armchair to the monk who came to hear him. The latter declined it, pretending that the Emperor should not abase himself so much. "Excuse me," replied the humble penitent, "the Emperor is nothing at this moment: you are the superior."—*Lassausse.*

St. Joachim and Constantia.

St. Joachim was summoned to hear the confession of the Empress Constantia. She led him into her oratory where a grand throne was prepared for herself, and lower down a simple stool for the Confessor. Pride had established such a custom and weakness had tolerated it. The Saint, addressing the princess, said: "Remember you are here as a criminal; leave therefore your throne and make your confession in a more humble posture, or I must withdraw."

Constantia, who was really pious, and only followed custom without adverting to it, did as the Saint required, and, kneeling on the floor, made her confession with sentiments of great faith and piety.—*Guillois.*

Praise by a Protestant.

The celebrated physician Tissot was giving, at Lausanne, the assistance of his art to a young foreign lady, whose disease soon assumed an alarming character. Being made aware of her dangerous state, and tormented by the regret of leaving life so soon, she becomes violently agitated, and almost falls into despair. The physician judged that this new shock would shorten still more her term of life; he warned her, according to his custom, that there was no time to lose in administering the helps of religion. A Catholic priest is called in; the patient receives, as the only remaining good, the words of consolation that fall from his mouth. She becomes composed, occupies herself with God and her eternal interests, receiving the last Sacraments in an edifying manner, and, next morning, the physician found her in a state of peace and tranquillity that astonished him. He remarked that the fever had abated, and that all the symptoms were changed for the better; very soon the disease disappeared. M. Tissot, Protestant though he was, loved to relate this anecdote; he even exclaimed with admiration: "Behold the power of confession amongst Catholics!"—*Guillois.*

XIX.—PENANCE AND RESTITUTION.

The Soldier's Little Sins.

Four or five years ago, a venerable clergyman was crossing the Mediterranean in a steamboat. A poor blind man was sitting on the deck of the boat, silently munching a piece of dry bread; no one took any notice of him. He was at once approached by an African soldier going home on leave. "Old man," said he, "you seem to fare but poorly; here, take a share of the contents of my flask; it will do you good, and do me no harm." And the soldier sits down beside the poor man, and enlivens the meal by relating some incidents of his African campaign. Soon the passengers formed a circle round the two joyous messmates. The last drop of wine had been swallowed by the blind man, when the soldier cries out: "That is not the

end of it, old fellow! to-morrow I must moisten your dry bread for you again." And at the same time he unceremoniously takes off the blind's man dirty hat, and goes round the boat with it, even waking up those who were asleep, presenting his improvised begging-box to each, saying with an accent not easily imitated: "For a poor blind man!" When he came to the priest who relates the fact, the latter shook hands with him and said: "That is right, my worthy fellow!" "Ah! Reverend Father, it is for satisfaction for my little sins, for I gave the big ones to Father Parabère, who was our chaplain there below," and so saying he escaped into the admiring and astonished crowd, and went to pour into the blind man's capacious pocket the fruits of his collection.—*Cath. Anecd.*

The Gold Ring.

A man of noble rank, but unhappily a great sinner, at length, touched by grace, felt some desire to be converted; but as he was too well known in France, he went to Rome, with the intention of making his confession to the Sovereign Pontiff himself. Pope Pius VI. actually heard his confession, and was even edified by the excellent dispositions he manifested; and yet when it came to the imposing of penance, the foreign nobleman would accept none of those which the Pope gave him. None was to his liking. He was too weak to fast, he said; he had not time to read or pray much; to retire into solitude to devote himself to pious meditations, or even to make a pilgrimage to some venerated shrine, all that, his occupations did not permit. To watch, to give himself the discipline, to lie on the ground, oh! his health would suffer too much. The Pope, in his wisdom, then gave him, for his whole penance, a gold ring, on which were engraved the Latin words *Memento Mori,* which means, "Remember thou shalt die." He imposed it on him to wear this ring on his finger, and to read at least once a day the words engraved upon it. The nobleman went away well pleased to have so light a penance. Nevertheless, it was soon to be followed by others much more serious. The daily sight of that ring penetrated him with the thought of death, that he ceased not to say within himself: "Alas! since I am condemned to die, what have I to do here below except to prepare for a good death? What doth it profit me to spare my health which death will soon take from me altogether? What use is it to pamper my body and take such care of it, since it is

to rot in the ground?" When he had made these reflections for some time, no penance appeared too painful for him. He thenceforward accepted all those that were imposed upon him, and persevered till death in those happy dispositions.—*Schmid.*

St. Francis and the Soldier.

A soldier, moved to repentance, on hearing St. Francis of Sales preaching on the mercy of God, threw himself at the feet of the Saint, almost in despair. St. Francis received him kindly, and prepared him for confession. Finding him full of sincere contrition, he gave him as his penance simply a *Pater* and *Ave.* The soldier, full of fear of God, humbly asked a longer penance, but the Saint pacified his fears, and bade him be content with the penance given him. Some time later, having obtained his discharge, the soldier again goes to St. Francis to inform him that he now intends to enter a monastery to do penance for his sins.—The pain of living without pleasure is well worth the pleasure of dying without pain.—*Cat. en Ex.*

St. Aloysius and the Weather.

St. Aloysius, speaking of the inconveniences caused by the heat and cold of summer and winter, said that of all mortifications they were the most pleasing to God, for two reasons: first, because they came from the hand of God, and therefore should be most dear to us; second, because they are more hidden, and thus less exposed to be influenced by vanity or pride.—*Cat. en Ex.*

XX.—INDULGENCES.

Visit to a Prison.

Supposing we went to a large prison and found a number of unhappy beings laden with chains, condemned to painful work for twenty or forty years, or perhaps for life. We say to them: "The Queen, in her goodness, is willing to shorten the time of your punishment, or even to remit it altogether, on condition of your saying a short prayer, or doing some simple work of piety, short and very easy. If you accept the condition, the doors of the prison will be opened to you and you can at once rejoin your family." Would there be one of these prisoners found to refuse such easy conditions? These prisoners are mankind, all debtors to the justice of

God. The prison is Purgatory. The sufferings of this life are as nothing to the sufferings of Purgatory. These we can shorten or escape altogether by gaining indulgences. Who can fail to see how salutary is the practice of trying to gain them!—*Gaume.*

St. Zephyrinus and Natalis.

Eusebius, in his history of the Church, relates the circumstances of an Indulgence granted at the commencement of the third century by the holy pontiff, St. Zephyrinus, to a Bishop named Natalis, who had fallen into the grievous sin of apostasy. This unhappy man had at one time generously confessed the faith before the persecutors, and shared in the sufferings of the martyrs, but in an evil moment he had allowed himself to be seduced by the artifices of certain heretics, who sacrilegiously consecrated him bishop of their sect. Almighty God, taking compassion on the unhappy man, strove to recall him to his duty by many heavenly visions, but as he continued obstinate in his error, being withheld from retracing his steps by pride and interest, He mingled justice with His mercy, and sent His angels to him during the night to scourge him severely, as they had done to Heliodorus of old in the temple of Jerusalem. Upon the following day Natalis covered himself with sackcloth and ashes, and shedding abundance of tears, went and threw himself at the feet of Zephyrinus, showing him the marks of the stripes which he had received, and beseeching most earnestly that he might be received back into the Communion of the Faithful. In like manner he prostrated himself on the ground at the feet of the clergy and even of the laity, imploring their prayers, so that the whole assembly was moved with compassion. Whereupon St. Zephyrinus granted him an Indulgence, relaxing the rigor of the penitential canons in his regard, in consideration of the stripes he had received and his sincere compunction, and readmitting him to the Communion of the Church.—*Butler.*

The First Crusade.

In 1095, Pope Urban II. presided over the Council of Claremont. To induce the Faithful more efficaciously to take up the cross, he granted the remission of punishment due to sin, to all who should join the Crusade for the deliverance of the Holy Land, and should die in Christian sentiments in the expedition. This is the first plenary indulgence we read of in Church history.—*Bouvier.*

The Pair of Scales.

Blessed Berthold had just preached a powerful sermon on alms-deeds, and at the conclusion, was giving to the Faithful ten days' indulgence, by special power from the Pope. A lady of rank, having lost her wealth, and being reduced to want, came and made known her misery to the preacher. He said to her: "You have just gained ten days' indulgence; go to a certain banker, who doesn't much value spiritual goods and offer him your merit in return for his alms. I think he will help you." The poor woman hastened to the banker, who received her well and asked how much she wished for her ten days' indulgence. "As much as they weigh," she replied. "Well, here's a pair of scales: write on paper the ten days' indulgence, and put it in one of the basins: in the other I will put some money." And see, the former weighs down the money! The astonished banker keeps adding and adding, without effecting any change, till at last he has put in as much as his visitor needs for her present wants, then the scales balance! A precious lesson for the banker, who was thereby taught the value of spiritual things in the scales of divine mercy.—*Cat. en Ex.*

XXI.—EXTREME UNCTION.

An Old Doctor's Opinion.

"It is now fifty years since I began to visit the hospitals and attend the dying. On my word of honor, I can declare before God and man, that I have never once seen any evil effect follow from announcing to the sick their approaching death and requesting them to receive the Sacraments. On the contrary, I have known them to receive it quite calmly, and to thank those who offered to send them the priest."—*Cat. en Ex.*

Funerals and Cemeteries.

The Church has ever shown great respect to the bodies of the dead. At interments, she employs the solemn offices of the Dirge and *Requiem* Mass, with candles and flowers, incense and holy water. The cemetery, which really means a dormitory, she consecrates by the prayers of the Bishop. It has always been held that burial of the excommunicated therein is unlawful. Cemeteries

formerly enjoyed the same right and degree of asylum, in the case of criminals fleeing to them for shelter, as the Churches to which they were attached.—*Cath. Dict.*

The Dying Hermit.

St. John Climacus, a celebrated writer, and one worthy of credit, relates a remarkable example of how persons are assaulted by devils at the hour of death. There was one Stephen, a hermit, he says, who, after he had lived a great part of his life in solitude, fasting, watching, and praying, at last fell sick; and when he was at the point of death, the devil set upon him, and proposed many things to him. Sometimes he cried out (so that all who were present heard him): "So it is indeed, I confess I did it; but I have fasted and prayed so many years for it." Other times he cried out: "Thou liest, I did not do it;" and again he said: "It is so indeed; but I have shed tears for it; yet notwithstanding," said he, "there is need of mercy." This example ought to make you wary in all your actions, and fly sin, and all the occasions of sin, since this holy man, who had lived nearly forty years a retired and holy life, was so hard pressed by the devil at the hour of his death.

The Young Child.

At the beginning of Lent, 1850, a priest in Paris was summoned to a young boy's bedside, given up by the doctors. The priest gave him Holy Communion and then administered Extreme Unction, which the child received with great fervor and devotion: he afterwards tried to console the heartbroken mother, and then took his leave, never for a moment expecting to see the boy again in this life. The following day the doctor was surprised to find him still alive, and what was his astonishment to see that all fever had gone, and all the symptoms of death of the previous day. He was bewildered! Three days later, the boy was up and playing with his brother, and his health continued to improve. Such was one of the results of Extreme Unction.—*Cat. en Ex.*

XXII.—HOLY ORDERS.

Celerinus and Aurelius.

Celerinus, a young man of rank, who suffered for the faith, was called by St. Cyprian to the office of Lector. Thinking himself un-

worthy of the dignity, it was only when Our Lord made known His will by a vision that he was prevailed on to consent. Aurelius, his companion, showed a like reluctance, thus giving proof of the high esteem they had for Holy Orders.—*St. Cyprian.*

St. Martin and the Emperor.

St. Martin, the illustrious Bishop of Tours, being on a visit, upon certain business, at the Court of the Emperor Maximus, was invited with the priest who accompanied him to sit down to dinner at the Emperor's table. During the repast a cup of wine was poured out and presented to Maximus, who, wishing to do honor to the holy Bishop, ordered it to be first handed to him, expecting that, when he had tasted, he would return it to him again. To his surprise, however, and that of the whole Court, St. Martin, after he had drunk, passed the cup to his companion the priest, as being the most exalted person in the assembly. So far from being displeased, Maximus applauded this action of the Saint, acknowledging that, in the sight of God, who estimates things at their true value, the imperial is far inferior to the priestly dignity.—*Butler.*

The Priest-hater.

A man who had murdered many priests during the Revolution, had sworn that no priest should ever set foot in his house and go forth alive. He fell sick, and a priest, facing the danger he was fully aware of, ventured to appear before him. Seeing him, the sick man falls into a fury, and summoning up all his strentgh, exclaims: "What! a priest in my house! Bring me my pistols!" His pistols are refused to him; then drawing out his knife, he threatens the priest, and says: "This knife has slaughtered a dozen of your priests." "You are mistaken, my dear man," answers the priest mildly: "there is one less to be counted, the twelfth is not dead; I am he; see the marks of the wounds you gave me; God has preserved me to save you." At these words he embraces the sick man, and helps him to die well.—*Gaume.*

XXIII.—MATRIMONY.

Example of Pagan Affection.

Mausoleus, King of Caria, in Asia Minor, dying after the reign of twenty-four years, left the throne to Queen Artemisia, his wife.

That princess employed all her power and riches only in signalizing the affection she had had for her husband. Wishing to immortalize her grief, she raised, in honor of her dear Mausoleus, a monument so magnificent, so splendid, so richly decorated, that it passed for one of the seven wonders of the world; hence it was that the name of *mausoleum* was subsequently given to all remarkable monuments erected to the memory of the dead. That nothing might be wanting to the glory of her husband, that princess, a true model of wives and widows, founded a prize in favor of the orator who should best succeed in pronouncing the eulogy of the deceased monarch. Artemisia did not even content herself with these public proofs of her conjugal affection. She went so far as to gather carefully the ashes of Mausoleus, and have his bones pulverized, and, every day, she put a little of that powder into her drink, desirous of making her own body, so to say, the living tomb of her husband. She survived him but two years, and her love ended only with her life. She died in 351 before Christ.—*Filassier.*

St. Monica and Patricius.

St. Monica may serve as a model for persons whom God calls to manage a household. Patricius, her husband, was a pagan, and gave himself up to all the impetuosity of his passions. Monica's great care was to gain him for God. For that she labored by her submission, her mildness, her patience. She was most careful never to make him any hasty or unreasonable reproaches. She never complained of him; on the contrary, she hid his faults from all her acquaintances. By this truly Christian conduct she succeeded in gaining her husband's heart; he esteemed, he admired, and respected her. She often addressed fervent prayers to the Lord for his conversion; they were at length heard. Patricius allowed himself to be instructed in the Christian religion, and was converted. He received Baptism, and thenceforward he became chaste, modest, meek, worthy, in short, of having St. Monica for a wife.—*Godescard.*

Example of Prudence.

In 1836, a certain lady was on the point of contracting a brilliant marriage, when she learned that her intended husband not only did not approach the Sacraments, but even allowed himself at times to ridicule religion. She turned to God for guidance, and then an-

nounced to her family that the marriage would not take place. She hastened to return the valuable presents she had received, and all the efforts of her friends to make her reconsider the matter were of no avail. After that, she married a man of little fortune but great virtue, and her marriage proved a most hapy one.—*Guillois.*

St. Margaret of Scotland.

St. Margaret was married and crowned Queen of Scotland in 1070, being then twenty-four years of age. The marriage was solemnized at King Malcolm's royal castle at Dunfermline, built in the midst of a beautiful plain, surrounded with woods, rocks and rivers. Malcolm was rough and unpolished, but neither haughty nor capricious. Margaret, by the most tender complaisance, and the most condescending and engaging carriage, always full of respect, gained so great an ascendant over him as to seem entirely mistress of his heart. She softened his temper, cultivated his mind, polished his manners, and inspired him with the most perfect sentiments of all Christian virtues, so that he became one of the most virtuous kings that had ever adorned the Scottish throne. And so much was the king charmed with her wisdom and piety, that he not only left to her the whole management of his domestic affairs, but followed her prudent advice in the government of his kingdom.—*Butler.*

XXIV.—THE SACRAMENTALS.

Holy Water and the Grasshoppers.

Blessed Theodoret, a Doctor of the Church, relates that St. Aphraates, having left Persia, his own country, became a solitary in the neighborhood of Antioch, the capital of Syria. That country is sometimes ravaged in a singular manner by clouds of grasshoppers, which settle down on the fields, devouring everything green that they can find, and, to crown the misfortune, sometimes cause a plague, by the multitudes that die and decay on the ground. In a certain year, when the pestilence appeared in all its horrors in the vicinity of Antioch, a poor man went to St. Aphraates, beseeching him to come to his assistance. "Father," said he, "we are lost. Here are the grasshoppers coming; they will eat up my field of wheat, and it is all I have to feed my wife and children, and pay the

Emperor's taxes. I beseech you, man of God, have pity on me!" "But, my good man, I can do nothing of myself; it is only God who can work a miracle in your behalf. Nevertheless, if you have confidence, bring me a pitcher of water." The poor laborer went out, and quickly returned with the water; St. Aphraates dipped his hand in it, said a prayer over it, and having blessed it, gave it to the man, telling him to take the pitcher, and sprinkle a little of the holy water it contained all round his field. He did so exactly, and the power of the miraculous water was speedily manifested. The grasshoppers arrived and in a moment darkened the air, and covered the country to a great distance; but not a single one crossed the limits of our laborer's field; such of them as went in that direction were thrown back as if by an invisible agency. The crop on that field was most abundant, convincing every one of the sanctity of Aphraates, and of the virtue of holy water.—*Genevaux.*

XXV.—PRAYER.

The Blind Man at the Tomb.

Long ago, when the light of the true faith was shining brightly in our land, a poor blind man was seen making a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury. He went there to ask, through the prayers of the Saint, the recovery of his sight. His prayer was granted, and he returned home cured. When the first transports of joy were over, he remembered that in his prayer to the Saint he had omitted to add these words: "If it should be the will of God." So he returned to the Saint's tomb, and said, "O great St. Thomas, I thank thee for the favor thou hast obtained for me from God. But if the use of my eyes should prove hurtful to me, or should endanger my eternal salvation, I humbly ask of thee to make me blind again." At the same moment he once more lost the use of his eyes and became blind as before. He spent the rest of his days in preparing for a happy death, and when that day came it found him ready.—*Schmid.*

St. Bernard's Vision.

St. Bernard once saw how an angel wrote down in a book the divine praises of each of his brethren, when reciting the divine office. Some were written in letters of gold, to express the fervor with

which they were said. Others in letters of silver, on account of the pure intention with which they were performed. Others again in ink, denoting the sloth which accompanied them. And others with water, denoting great lukewarmness and absence of all piety. Others were not written down at all, but instead, these words: "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me," to signify that God was most displeased with such prayer.—*Müller.*

The Widow's Child.

A poor widow one morning said to her little ones: "My children, I have nothing to give you to-day for your breakfast; there is no bread, nor flour, nor even an egg in the house. Go and ask God to come to your assistance, for He has promised to help His children in their need." One of the children, aged only ten, went out of the house, and seeing the door of a Church open, entered and fell on his knees before the altar. He looked around him to see if there was any one near, but he saw no person; the Church seemed to be empty. Thinking himself alone, he spoke out aloud. "O good Father Who art in Heaven, we poor children have nothing to eat to-day. O my God, give us something to eat, that we may not die of hunger." When he had said this prayer he rose up, and hungry though he was, went to school for his morning lessons. On his return home, he was surprised to see on the table a great loaf of bread, a dish full of flour, and a basket full of eggs. "Oh. mamma," he cried out with great joy, "God has heard my prayer. Was it an angel who brought in all these nice things by the window?" "No," said the mother, "but God heard your prayer, and has answered it in His own way. When you were kneeling at the foot of the altar, and when you thought you were alone, there happened to be a pious lady near you whom you did not see. She heard your prayer, and it is she who brought us all these good things. She was the angel whom God sent to help us. Let us kneel down and thank Him for His goodness to us, and during all your lifetime be sure to ask Him for what you need with the same confidence, and you will be sure to obtain it."—*Gaume.*

St. Ignatius and the Carrier.

It is related in the life of St. Ignatius that, being at one time on a journey with some of his pious companions, they hired a peasant

to carry their baggage, for they were traveling on foot. Their carrier proved to be a very ignorant and also a very passionate man; and, when first the good priests hired him, he was much addicted to cursing and swearing, so that they had frequently occasion to reprove and exhort him. Whenever these holy men arrived at an inn, the first thing they did, after hiring a room for themselves and the carrier, was to retire into a corner to pray. In the meantime, the carrier generally slept on a bench or sat warming himself by the fire. After some time, however, observing the heavenly countenances of these holy men while thus employed, and beginning to think that it might be because they prayed so devoutly that they were so good to every one, and so happy and cheerful in the midst of difficulties and privations, he determined to do as they did, and, kneeling down at a distance from them, remained in that posture till they rose up to pursue their journey. Having continued this practice for some time, the carrier seemed to every one to be changed into another man, for he became sober, civil, patient, and obliging. The good religious with reason attributed this happy change to the help which he must have obtained from God since he applied himself to prayer; but, wishing to satisfy themselves further, they one day asked him what prayers he said. "You know that I can not read," replied the carrier, "neither have I been taught how to pray; but this is what I say to God when I see you praying: 'Lord, I am a poor, ignorant man, and I know not how to serve you; but what these holy men are doing, I at least desire to do.'" The good missionaries were much edified by the reply of the peasant, and returned thanks to God, to whom a hearty good will is more acceptable than the finest language. —*Diurnal of the Soul.*

The Poor Man at Prayer.

In the parish of Ars, in the time of its saintly curé or parish priest, John Baptist Vianney, lived a simple peasant, poor in the goods of this world and ignorant of its learning, but rich in piety and virtue. He was particularly remarkable for his ardent devotion to Our Blessed Lord in the most holy Sacrament. Whether going to his work or returning from it, never did that good man pass the Church door without entering it to adore his Lord. He would leave his tools at the door, and remain for hours together sitting or kneeling before the tabernacle. The holy curé, who watched him with great

delight, could never perceive the slightest movement of the lips. Being surprised at this circumstance, he said to him one day, "My good man, what do you say to Our Lord in those long visits you pay Him every day?" "I say nothing to Him," was the reply; "I look at Him and He looks at me."—*Life of the Curé of Ars.*

XXVI.—PRAYER (Continued).

St. Francis of Assisi.

St. Francis found a sure means of keeping his mind during prayer free from all external preoccupation. Whenever he entered into a Church he said: "Worldly and frivolous thoughts, stay you at the door till I return again." Then he prayed as though he were alone on the earth; his devotion was so great that he seemed not to know what distraction was.—*His Life: Oct. 4.*

St. Dominic and the Stone.

St. Dominic prayed with such recollection and composure that a stone, having become loose in the roof of the Church, fell and just grazed his ear, without his being in the least disturbed or distracted by it.

Servatus of Rome.

There lived in Rome a poor man whose name was Servatus. He was afflicted with paralysis and could not walk, nor even turn his body from one side to the other, nor raise his hand to his mouth. He was carried daily by some charitable persons and laid at the gate of the Church of St. Clement, that he might receive an alms from those who went in and out of that Church. Of the alms that were given him he spent a little for his own support, and the rest he distributed among the pilgrims who came to visit the pious places in the city, many of whom found shelter in his humble home. He was accustomed to spend the entire day in meditation on spiritual things, and as he could not read, he used to ask those to whom he gave hospitality to read for him. Thus, by hearing the Word of God read to him he was able to feed his soul with heavenly doctrine, and people who heard him speak were astonished at his great knowledge and the wisdom of his answers. But the principal fruit

of his meditations was the high degree of holiness to which he attained. His patience under his heavy afflictions was invincible; he was continually heard thanking God for his infirmities, and was always singing hymns of praise to Him.—*St. Gregory the Great.*

XXVII.—THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Sejour's Seven Paters.

A soldier named Beau Sejour had the pious custom of reciting every day seven *Our Fathers* and seven *Hail Marys,* in honor of the seven joys and seven sorrows of the Blessed Virgin. He was so faithful to this practice that he never once missed it. One battle day, Beau Sejour was in the front rank, in presence of the enemy, awaiting the signal for attack. Remembering then that he had not said his accustomed prayer, he began to do so, after blessing himself as usual. The other soldiers who were beside him, seeing Beau Sejour at his prayers, began to make merry at his expense; they went so far as to call him a coward, a poltroon, and such like. The word flew from mouth to mouth: "Beau Sejour is afraid, Beau Sejour is a devotee!" He heard all this going on, but, nevertheless, continued his prayer quite unconcerned. But what happened some moments later? The enemy made their first charge, and, wonderful to relate, of his whole rank, Beau Sejour alone remained standing; he saw lying dead at his feet all those who, but a moment before, were ridiculing him for his piety! All the rest of the battle, which was long and bloody, and even during the whole campaign, a tedious and disastrous one, he received no wound. After the war he obtained his discharge, and returned home safe and sound, fully resolved never to leave off a practice he had found so beneficial.—*Debussi.*

The Swearer and the Our Father.

A man had the bad habit of swearing often on the most trifling account. He was cured of it in a very singular way by a little girl of five or six years old. The child, unable to hear without indignation the sacrilegious words vomited forth by this man, one day asked her mother if she thought Mr. So-and-so said the Lord's Prayer every day. The mother answered that she did not know. The little girl was determined to make herself sure, and watching

him closely, she one day perceived him really saying the Lord's Prayer. Soon after, when an opportunity offered, the most revolting blasphemies were heard again. The little girl went up to him and said with a serious air: "Mr. So-and-so, you said the Lord's Prayer this morning, and gave God the name of Father?"—"Well, yes! but why do you ask the question?"—"Why, how could you call Him your Father, when you swear all day long and grievously offend Him?" The culprit, not expecting any such question, especially from a little child, felt the blush rising to his forehead; and what is better, he was never after heard to curse or swear.—*Schmid.*

The Pious Shepherd.

A priest was one day traveling among the mountains of Auvergne, when he perceived a boy at a little distance who was feeding his sheep on the hillside. Being struck with his devout and recollected appearance, he turned aside to speak to him. "My child," said he, "you must feel very lonely all day here by yourself." "Oh, no, father," said the boy, "I am not at all lonely, for I have always something to do." "And what do you do?" rejoined the priest. "I have a beautiful prayer that I say," replied the child. "Is it a very long one," said the priest, "that you are busy all day saying it?" "No, father," replied the boy, "it is a very short one, and yet I can never get to the end of it." "How is that?" asked the priest;—"but first tell me what is the prayer you say." "It is the Our Father," said the shepherd; "but when I first say the words, *Our Father who art in Heaven,* I come to a stop and can go no further." "Why so?" asked the priest. "Because I can not help crying," replied the child, "when I think of those words. Is it possible, I say to myself, that I can have God for my Father—God, who made that beautiful sky, that bright sun, those lofty mountains, and all the universe! And yet I know that it is true, and that He allows me, a poor shepherd boy, to call Him by the name of Father, while He on His part, loves and cherishes me as if I were His only child. Then, when I think of all this, I begin to weep, and can not get on with my prayer. See, father," continued the boy, pointing with his finger over the valley, "see, *there* is the little village where I live. It is very small, and has only a few poor cottages. My family is the poorest of all, and yet I can call God my Father as truly, and

be as much loved by Him as if I were the greatest gentleman in the city. I am a child of God just the same as he. This it is which makes me weep, and hinders me from finishing my prayer." "No matter," replied the priest, much moved; "do as you have been doing, and God will love you and bless you." So saying, the good father went on his way, praising Almighty God, who has hidden the mysteries of His goodness from the proud and worldly wise, and has revealed them to His chosen little ones.—*Catholic Anecdotes.*

XXVIII.—THE LORD'S PRAYER (Continued).

St. John and the Nobleman.

We read in the life of St. John, Patriarch of Alexander, surnamed the Almoner on account of his extraordinary almsdeeds, that he had on several occasions tried in vain to reconcile to each other two noblemen who had quarreled, and lived in a state of mortal enmity. At length, despairing of moving them by his words and entreaties, he sent for the one who showed the greatest degree of obstinacy, inviting him to come to his house and assist at the Mass which he was about to celebrate in his private oratory. The nobleman accepted the invitation, and on his arrival the Saint began the Mass, and proceeded as far as the Pater Noster, or Our Father, which it was the custom at that time, for those who assisted at the Mass, to recite along with the priest. St. John accordingly began it, and the nobleman said it with him; but as soon as he reached the fifth petition, the Saint came to a full stop, and left the nobleman to finish it alone. Then, turning to him, he exhorted him earnestly to weigh the meaning of the words he had pronounced; that there, in the very presence of Jesus Christ, he had implored God to pardon him or not, according as he forgave or refused to forgive his enemy. The nobleman was so struck with this reflection, that he fell at the Saint's feet, promising to dismiss all thoughts of revenge, and to go at once and ask his enemy's forgiveness. No sooner was the Mass over than he put his design into execution, and from that moment became a sincere friend to his former adversary.—*Butler.*

The Two Sebastians.

The blessed Sebastian Valfré, when a boy at school, was distinguished for his amiable manners and sweet and gentle disposition.

One day a quarrel arose between two of his companions, and one of them, who was likewise called Sebastian, being very angry, openly declared that he would have his revenge for the injury he had received. The young Valfré, hearing of this, went to the angry boy and thus accosted him: "Did you say the Our Father this morning, my dear Sebastian?" "I did," replied the other. "But did you say it attentively?" continued Valfré, in a sweet and persuasive tone. "Most certainly," said the other, who did not see the drift of the question. "Then," continued Valfré, "since you said it with attention, you must have observed these words, *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.* Ah, my dear friend, let us not shut ourselves out from the hope of the divine mercy by refusing to pardon those who give us offense." The angry boy was so touched by these simple words of the pious youth, that he laid aside all thoughts of revenge and forgave his school-fellow on the spot.—*Life of B. Sebastian Valfré.*

Hermann, the Tailor.

There lived in a village in Germany a tailor, whose name was Hermann. For twenty years this good man supported his family by working at his trade, and during all that time they never knew what want was. He had also, by his good example and by watchful care, taught his children to serve God in this world, that they might be happy with Him for ever in the next. But in the year 1770, a great famine broke out all over the country, and the good Hermann often passed three or four days without any work. Very soon he had to sell even the furniture of the house to buy bread for his little ones. At last even this failed him, and one morning he rose from his bed without knowing where he was to find a morsel of food for his famishing children. He was surrounded by them crying out to him for bread, and holding out their little hands to him. "O father, we are so hungry," they cried, "give us something to eat." These words pierced his very heart. To console them he said: "I have nothing just now to give you, my dear children, but try and have a little patience till mid-day, and then we shall have enough to eat." "But where will it come from?" they all cried out. He pointed with his finger towards Heaven; and then rising up, he left them that they might not see his tears. He went into the next room, and, falling down on his knees, prayed to God in these words: "O my God, shall I have the grief to see my little ones die of hunger

before my eyes? Thou, who givest food to the birds of the air, come and help us, for now is the time." As he was ending this prayer, one of the children came running to tell him that there was some one at the door who wanted to speak to him. It was a lady who came to ask if he could make some clothing for her three children, who were to assist at a marriage in a few days. To induce him to do the work more quickly, she brought him a little present, which she said would likely be acceptable in these hard times. Saying these words, she took from a basket she was carrying in her hand, a loaf of bread, some flesh meat, a little bag of flour, and other kinds of food. Hermann then told the lady of the sad state to which they had been reduced by the famine, and how he had that very hour promised his children food, without knowing whence it was to come. The lady was moved to tears at his story and his pious confidence in God. Before going away, she told him that as long as the famine lasted, she herself would provide for him and his family. Who can describe the joy of that happy family and their gratitude to God for His Fatherly assistance. They sat down to table, and after begging the blessing of God, they partook with joy of the food which He had sent them.—*Christ. Perfection.*

XXIX.—THE ANGELIC SALUTATION.

The Criminal and the Hail Mary.

A man condemned to death, in Germany, refused to hear speak of confession. A Jesuit Father employed all manner of means to convert him: prayers, tears, penances, exhortations—but to no effect. At length he said to him: "Let us say the *Hail Mary* together." The prisoner, to get rid of his visitor, consented, and no sooner had he done so than tears began to fall from his eyes, he made his confession, full of contrition and humility, and would only die with a statue of Our Lady in his hands.—*Cat. en Ex.*

"Mary, Help Me!"

A young man, who had many times fallen into grievous mortal sin, went to confession to a certain priest. The good priest was greatly affected on learning that he had fallen so often. But to encourage him he said: "My child, I will tell you an easy means of overcoming the temptations to which you have so often yielded; if you do what I tell you, you will never fall again." "O my father," he replied,

"tell me what it is, for with my whole heart do I desire to overcome these evil habits." "Place yourself entirely under the protection of the Blessed Virgin," said the priest, "say a *Hail Mary* every morning and evening in honor of her immaculate purity, and whenever you are tempted to do evil, say to her at once, 'O Mary, help me, for I am thine.'" The young man followed this advice, and in a short time was entirely delivered from his evil habits.—*Chisholm.*

Efficacy of the Hail Mary.

In the year 1604 there were in a city of Flanders two young students who, instead of attending to the acquisition of learning, sought only the indulgence of the appetite and the gratification of their unchaste passions. One night they went to a house of ill-fame; after some time, one of them, called Richard, returned home, and the other remained. After having reached his house, Richard, while undressing to go to bed, remembered that he had not said the *Hail Marys* which he was accustomed to recite every day in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Being oppressed with sleep, he felt a great repugnance to say them, however, he did violence to himself and recited the usual *Hail Marys,* without devotion, and half asleep. He went to bed, and during his first sleep, he heard a loud knock at the door, and instantly saw before him his companion, presenting a deformed and hideous appearance. "Who are you?" said Richard. "Do you not know me?" replied the other. "How," rejoined Richard, "have you undergone such a change? You look like a demon." "Ah! unhappy me," exclaimed the other, "I am damned. In leaving that infamous house I was strangled. My body lies in the street, and my soul is in hell. Know that the same chastisement awaited you, but the Blessed Virgin, on account of your little devotion of reciting the *Hail Marys,* has saved you from it." Richard, shedding a torrent of tears, fell prostrate on the ground, to thank Mary, his deliverer, and resolved on a change of life for the future.—*St. Alphonsus.*

St. Alphonsus and the Hail Mary.

St. Alphonsus called the *Hail Mary* the delicious word of the Saints. He never experienced pleasure equal to that he felt when saying this prayer; and in reciting it at the beginning of the office, he often shed sweet tears of joy, and in his sermons constantly spoke of its power to his audience.—*Cat. en Ex.*

XXX.—THE ANGELIC SALUTATION (Continued).

St. Francis of Sales.

St. Francis de Sales, as we read in his life, experienced the efficacy of the prayer: "Remember, O most pious Virgin." At the age of seventeen he was in Paris, pursuing his studies, and entirely consecrated to the exercises of devotion and to the divine love, which filled his soul with the sweet delights of paradise. To try his fidelity and to unite him more closely to His love, the Lord permitted the devil to represent to him that he was doomed to perdition, and that therefore all his good works were lost. His fears and desolation became so great that he lost his appetite, his sleep, his color, the joy of his soul, and became an object of compassion to all who beheld him. During this frightful tempest, the Saint could conceive no thought, could utter no words but those of diffidence and sorrow. "Then," he would say, as we read in his life, "shall I be deprived of the grace of God, who has hitherto shown Himself so amiable and so sweet to me?" The temptation lasted a month; but at length the Lord was pleased to deliver him from it by means of most Holy Mary, the comfortress of the afflicted, under whose protection the Saint had already made a vow of chastity, and in whom, after God, he used to say, he had placed all his hopes. During the temptation, he one evening entered a Church, in which he saw hanging on the wall a tablet, on which he read the following prayer of St. Bernard: "Remember, O most pious Virgin, that it has never been heard that any one who had recourse to Thy protection was abandoned." Prostrate before the altar of the Divine Mother, he recited this prayer with tender affection—he renewed his vow of chastity—promised every day to recite the rosary, and then added: "My Queen, Thou art my advocate with Thy Son, to whom I dare not have recourse. My Mother, if I shall not be permitted to love my Lord in the next world, at least obtain for me the grace to love Him in this life." But scarcely was his prayer finished, when his most sweet Mother delivered him from the temptation. He instantly recovered his inward peace, and with it bodily health, and he afterwards continued to live most devoted to Mary, whose praises and favors he never ceased during his whole life to proclaim in his sermons and writings.—*His Life: Jan. 29.*

The Name of Jesus.

St. Frances was favored by Almighty God with the visible presence of her angel guardian, and with the sight of the evil spirits. She assured her confessor that, when the holy name was pronounced with respect, she saw not only her guardian angel, but also the devils, make a genuflection, with this difference, however, that the former did it in love while the latter did it by constraint.—*Her Life: Mrch. 9.*

St. Edmund and the Hail Mary.

St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, had been brought up with a great devotion to the Most Holy Virgin. When sending him to Paris to make his studies, his mother recommended to him to never let a day pass without having recourse to his divine protectress. That virtuous mother often wrote to him to avoid bad company, and to frequent the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; often, too, she sent him instruments of penance, to repress, she said, the bad inclinations that might injure his virtue. The holy young man, docile to the counsels of his mother, always showed himself most zealous for the glory of Mary. He went several times a day to prostrate himself before one of her statues; and to mark his engagement in the service of the Queen of Angels, he placed on the finger of one of her statues a ring, on which he had caused to be engraved the whole of the Angelical Salutation. You shall see how agreeable that devotion, so sincere, and so persevering, was to the Blessed Virgin. After the death of the blessed Edmund, it was remarked that the same prayer was engraved on his episcopal ring, to which that prayer communicated a virtue so efficacious and miraculous, that it was subsequently used to operate a great number of cures. It was sometimes sufficient to make the sick touch it and they were instantly cured. If we do not engrave the words of the *Hail Mary* on a ring, let us engrave them on our hearts, and that will be still better. —*Noel*

St. Teresa's Devotion.

St. Teresa was blessed with a good and virtuous mother, who taught her early to love the Blessed Virgin. She was not quite twelve years old when her mother died, and Teresa was almost inconsolable at her loss. In the midst of her affliction she threw her-

self before an image of Our Lady, and begged Her, with many tears, now that her earthly mother was taken from her, to be a Mother to her in her stead. This act, performed in all the fervor and simplicity of childhood, drew upon the young Teresa the special love and protection of Mary; and the Saint assures us that she never recommended herself to her heavenly Mother without experiencing help and relief.—*Her Life: Oct. 15.*

The Council of Ephesus.

To refute and condemn the errors of Nestorius, who denied the divine maternity of Mary, the Council of Ephesus was held in the year 431. The population of the town and neighborhood betook themselves to the square in front of the Church where the Council was being held, and there they remained nearly the whole day, impatient to learn the results. When at length, in the evening, it became knows that Nestorius was condemned and anathematized, and that the doctrine of the Church formally declared Mary to be the Mother of God, the enthusiasm of the multitude was unbounded—they cried aloud: "Mary is indeed the Mother of God; Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!" It was already dark, and the men lit torches to take to their homes the Fathers of the Council, while the women threw flowers and perfumes under their feet. The whole town was illuminated, and signs of true faith and joy were everywhere visible, as proof of their love and devotion to Mary.—*Tillemont.*

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